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Anne, Countess of Sunderland,
Second Daughter of John,
Duke of Marlborough.
From a Miniature in Enamel
In the Possession of Earl Spencer.

Engraved by W. Bond.

MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH,

WITH HIS

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE:

COLLECTED FROM

THE FAMILY RECORDS AT BLENHEIM,

AND

OTHER AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

ILLUSTRATED WITH

PORTRAITS, MAPS, AND MILITARY PLANS.

By WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.S.A.
ARCHDEACON OF WILTS.

SECOND EDITION.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS, &c.

CHAPTER 80.

1709.

Opening of the campaign. — Movements of both armies. — Strong position of Villars, behind the lines of La Bassée. — The armies of Eugene and Marlborough assemble on both sides of the Upper Dyle. — They join in the vicinity of Seclin. — Stratagems to deceive Villars. — Feint of an attack on the french lines. — Sudden march, and investment of Tournay. — Operations of the siege. — Ineffectual attempts of Villars to relieve it. — Surrender of the town. — Siege of the citadel. — Dreadful effects of the subterraneous warfare in the mines. — Surrender of the citadel.

Although Marlborough was disappointed in his hopes of peace, he yet did not rely so implicitly on the sincerity and apparent distress of France, as to delay the necessary preparations for an early and vigorous campaign. We have seen at the close of the preceding year, his efforts to anticipate the enemy, and his anxiety to collect a superior force. The french, however, were equally active on their side, and drawing troops from all quarters, were in a condition to take the field before the allies.

Indeed, the very circumstances on which the negotiators had founded their hopes of peace, contributed to rescue the french monarchy from disgrace; for famine and misery drove crowds of recruits to the camp, and verified the unfeeling remark of Louis, that hunger would compel his subjects to follow his bread waggons. An army was thus assembled, scarcely inferior in numbers or appointments to that of the allies. In the place of Vendome, the chief command was conferred on Villars, who had gained high reputation for checking the designs of Marlborough on the Moselle, and who was considered as the most fortunate and enterprising of the french generals, and honoured by the french monarch with the name of invincible.

Notwithstanding the excessive scarcity of provisions and forage, the most active exertions were made in all the frontier provinces, to collect necessaries for the army; and early in June the french troops were in motion for the plains of Lens, where they purposed to take a defensive position, to cover the places on the Scarpe and Lys, which they considered as principally menaced.

The rainy weather, as well as the extreme backwardness of the season, prevented the confederate generals from assembling their troops as early as they intended; but, without waiting for the definitive answer of France, they collected the army in the beginning of June. They issued orders to form a camp between Menin and Oudenard, and dispatched a corps of 12 battalions and as many squadrons, under the command of lieut.-general Dompré to take post at Alost, and to cover Brussels.

Having visited the different divisions of the army, they repaired to Lille on the 18th; and on the 21st, their whole force, amounting to 110,000 men, assembled between Courtray and Menin. On the following day, taking the route towards Lille, they encamped between Lincelles and Roubaix. On the 23d, the two generals, assuming the command, divided their troops into two great bodies. The right, consisting of imperialists and germans, under Eugene, crossed the Lower Dyle, below Lille; while the left, comprising the british, dutch, and the auxiliaries, traversed the Marque, at Pont à Marque; and they established their respective camps on both sides of the Upper Dyle. Marlborough fixed his head quarters at the abbey of Looz, and Eugene at the castle of Lompret. Orders were sent for the advance of the field artillery from Menin, and general Dompré, commander of the flying camp at Alost, was directed to join the army with the utmost speed.

It was the first object of the two commanders to force the enemy to a battle, or, if that could not be effected, to undertake a siege; and for the purpose of forming their decision, they sent out different detachments, to reconnoitre the position of the enemy.

Meanwhile Villars, having learnt the advance of the allies, took up a position between Douay and the Lys, behind a regular line, strong both by nature and art, extending from Aunay, near Pont à Vendin, to the west of Bethune. The right flank abutted on the high-crested canal of Douay, and was protected by numerous rivulets and impassable

marshes; the centre was covered by La Bassée, and the left supported on Bethune and the adjacent streams and marshes. Along the whole line were fortified villages, redoubts, and partial inundations. His great object seems to have been to protect the frontier provinces, and prevent the siege of Ypres. As he expected that the enemy would attack him in this position, he made the most active preparations for resistance; and the movements of the allies afforded sufficient grounds for his opinion. For, the formation of the confederate army between Menin and Courtray, as well as the passage of their battering train up the Lys, appearing to threaten Ypres, Villars retained his position, and increased the garrison by 16 battalions. The march of the allied forces to the Upper Dyle did not relieve his alarms. On the 23d, Eugene crossed at Haubourdin, and united with Marlborough, between Seclin and Wattignies; and on the 24th, as they reviewed their troops, and made demonstrations as if they were moving with their whole force against the enemy, Villars reinforced his army from the neighbouring garrisons, particularly from Tournay and the places on that side which appeared to be less threatened.

The extent of his precautions evinced a persuasion that his antagonists were determined to risk an engagement. Such, at least, was the impression which the movements of the confederate generals tended to convey; for on the 26th a council of war was held, and reports were industriously spread, that the resolution had been taken to attack the enemy. To give strength to these rumours, the

heavy baggage was sent back to Lille. But, in reality, the views of the allied commanders were now directed to another object; because, after reconnoitring the french lines, it was the unanimous opinion of all the generals, that it was too hazardous to attack the enemy in their camp, intrenched as it then was.* They therefore turned their attention to the siege of Tournay, though, to deceive Villars, they still continued to make demonstrations on the lines of La Bassée.

The feint thus practised on the french commander produced its full effect, and the same deception was continued, to cover the final and decisive movement. The battering artillery was remanded to Menin, bodies of troops from the army of Eugene directed their march towards the right of the hostile lines, and some even approached to the vicinity of La Bassée; while Marlborough appeared to move in the direction of Tournay.

In the midst of the perplexity occasioned by these different alarms, Villars continued to strengthen his position, and prepare for the approaching conflict; but, on the 29th of June, he learnt that the allied forces had re-united and marched towards Tournay, and that their battering train was re-ascending the Lys to approach that place. Their march was indeed made with the same skill and secresy, which characterised their operations on so many occasions. They decamped from Seclin at seven in the evening without beat of drum, and advanced part of the night in a direction towards the french camp; but when the troops of Marl-

* Letter from the duke to lord Godolphin, June 27.

borough expected the signal to engage, they were ordered to file towards the left, and to move in the direction of Tournay. They marched in two columns, one by Pont à Bovines, and the other by Pont à Tressin. At seven in the morning, the advanced corps reached the vicinity of Tournay, while the prince of Orange, with 10 battalions and 30 squadrons, drew towards St. Amand and Mortagne, from whence he dislodged the french posts, and covered the movement in that direction. The governor of Tournay was so ill prepared for their approach, that a part of the garrison, sent out to collect the cattle of the vicinity, were intercepted. General Lumley, with 24 battalions and 45 squadrons, began the investment at noon. At night, Eugene led his army to the same point, and the whole force united in the vicinity of Tournay. Marlborough, who was to superintend the siege, took up his head quarters at Villemeau; and Eugene, with the covering army, posted himself in a line extending from Pont à Tressin, on the Marque, toward St. Amand, on the Scarpe, for the purpose of observing the movements of Villars.

Before retiring to rest, after so fatiguing a march, Marlborough thus briefly explains the motives of these successful operations, in a note to the duchess.

"*June 27.* — If it had been reasonable, this letter would have brought you the news of a battle; but prince Eugene, myself, and all the generals, did not think it advisable to run so great a hazard, considering their camp, as well as their having strengthened it so, by their intrenchments; so that we have resolved on the siege of Tournay,

and accordingly marched last night, and have invested it, when they expected our going to another place, so that they have not half the troops in the town they should have, to defend themselves well, which makes us hope it will not cost us dear. I am so sleepy, that I can say no more, but am entirely yours."

Villars was so completely deceived by these masterly movements, that he observes, " their artillery, which ascended the Lys, again descended it on the side of Tournay; and it was evident that their object was, after defeating me, to thunder against Aire and St. Venant, with their heavy artillery, to penetrate as far as Boulogne, and after laying all Picardy under contribution, to push their detachments even to Paris. In this they would have succeeded, if listening to the timid counsels of certain general officers, *je m'etais* (to use his own expression) *blotti derrière la Scarpe.* It was a great relief to me that the enemy fixed on the siege of Tournay, which ought to occupy them the whole of the campaign."*

Tournay, which was thus rendered the object of general solicitude, is most advantageously situated on the frontier of France. Its circuit is large; the interior walls were of ancient construction, but a series of advanced works had been added by Vauban; and the citadel, which was a regular pentagon with exterior works, was considered by the great Condé as the most perfect of its kind. The town was commanded by no height, and a considerable part of the circumference could be additionally

* Mem. de Villars, vol. ii. p. 63.

defended by partial inundations of the Scheld. The citadel also, with several parts of the works, derived a considerable strength from a regular system of mines and connecting galleries. The fortifications were in the best state, and the magazines filled with ammunition and military stores. Its strength was duly estimated, and a pompous inscription, placed in one of the half moons, shews the opinion entertained of this bulwark by the french court. It states, that Louis the fourteenth, in 1667, took this ancient seat of the Nervii in four days; and, to render it impregnable, had added to it all military defences, and had assisted in the construction of this work, which the victorious hands of his troops had raised from its foundations in eight days.

The attack of such a place, if properly provided and garrisoned, must have been an act of extreme rashness, which could only terminate in disgrace. We cannot therefore sufficiently admire the skilful manœuvres of the two great commanders, in deceiving Villars himself, a master in military stratagem, and in laying siege to the place, at the moment when the garrison was not half equal to its defence, when many of the officers were absent, and even this scanty proportion of troops was ill supplied with provisions.

From the 3d to the 6th of July, the whole town, including the citadel, was regularly invested on both sides of the river, from Cercq, on the Upper Scheld, to the castle of Constantine, on the Lower. Three grand attacks were traced: the first, by count Lottum, general of the prussians, against

the citadel, opposite the gate of Valenciennes, near the left bank of the Upper Scheld; the second, by count Schulemburg, general of the saxons, against the horn-work of the gate of the seven fountains, near the left bank of the Lower Scheld; and the third by the dutch general, Fagel, on the right bank of the river, against the gate of Marville.

On the night of the 7th, the trenches were opened within half musket-shot of the works, with inconsiderable loss, as the approach of the assailants was not perceived by the garrison till break of day. The battering artillery, which had been anxiously expected, reached the besieging camp on the 10th. Notwithstanding the heavy rains, the advances were made with continued success, under the direction of the british commander. On the side of the town, the enemy were repulsed in all their sallies; the out-works were successively carried; and, on the 21st, the besiegers established themselves on the exterior covert-way. Towards the citadel, however, the dread of the numerous mines compelled them to proceed by the tedious operation of the sap, and, therefore, no effectual lodgment could be made on that point at this early period of the siege.

During these operations, Villars continued behind his lines, sending out numerous detachments to harass the besiegers, and take their connecting posts. Amongst others, he directed large bodies against the posts on the Lys, to intercept the communications of the allies with the country beyond. He succeeded in taking Warneton, before the reinforcement dispatched by the confederate gene-

rals could advance to its relief. But the conquest produced no essential advantage, except that of razing the fortification, for, on the approach of the allied troops, the french detachment retired; and Comines and Pont Rouge, which were equally threatened, were preserved.

In the midst of these operations, the confederate armies made a small movement; that under Eugene encamped with the right at Luchin, and the left at Esplechin, to which place Marlborough extended his right, stretching his left to * Espain. By this disposition all the attempts of Villars to harass the besiegers were effectually frustrated.

Having received reinforcements of 14 battalions and 22 squadrons from the Upper Rhine, the french marshal advanced in the direction of Douay, leaving 10,000 men behind the lines at La Bassée, and drawing thither the militia of Picardy and the Boulonnais. In order to cover the towns on the Upper Scheld and the Scarpe, he formed another line from Douay along the Scarpe, by Auchain to Homage, opposite Marchiennes, and from thence to the Scheld, near Condé. His infantry, amounting to 122 battalions, was posted behind this line; and, to complete the defence, he attacked and carried the post of Hasnon, on the right bank of the Scarpe, above St. Amand, making several demonstrations between the Scarpe and the Scheld, as if he designed to interrupt the siege. These movements, however, neither checked the operations nor distracted the attention of the allies; for

* Gazette, from the camp before Tournay, July 4.

while Marlborough was engaged in superintending the approaches, Eugene repaired from the army of observation to visit the post of St. Amand, and place it in a state of defence, in order to obviate any sudden attack.

On the 26th, a ravelin covering the gate leading to Valenciennes was carried by assault, and the besiegers even established themselves on the covert-way leading from that gate to the Scheld. At the same time, count Schulemburg filled up the ditch, and on the 27th, carried the horn-work of the seven fountains, with a contiguous bastion, and maintained the post against two sallies of the garrison. Meanwhile, general Fagel had made himself master of the whole counterscarp, near the gate of Marville; and a general assault was retarded only by the rains and inundations.

Convinced of the straits to which the place was reduced, Villars quitted his camp on the 29th at the head of a considerable force, with the view of breaking through the quarters of the assailants; but he had scarcely marched two leagues, before he was met by a messenger, with the unexpected news that the town had capitulated, after a siege of 21 days.

In fact, the governor perceiving preparations for a general assault, had hoisted the flag of truce at seven in the evening of the 28th. On the following day, Marlborough announces this auspicious event to his correspondents in England. His letter to Godolphin testifies his deference to prince Eugene, and the good harmony which subsisted between them.

"*July* 29. — I obey your commands in sending no officer with the news of the town of Tournay capitulating. They sent last night a brigadier to my quarters, and another of the same quality to prince Eugene's quarters ; but I shall take care there shall be no uneasiness between us, for I would not see the capitulations till I first spoke with him, so that we shall settle the capitulations this day at his quarters. By the Holland's post you shall have the particulars, for I send this morning Collins by Ostend. With my duty, I desire you will make my compliments to her majesty on this success."

A letter to the duchess evinces no less his sincere desire for peace, than his compassion for the sufferings of those who were exposed to the horrors of war.

"*July* 30. — We have at last signed the capitulation for the town of Tournay, so that to-morrow night we shall continue the attack on the citadel. The taking of it we fear will cost us more time and men than this of the town; but that which gives me the greatest prospect for the happiness of being with you is, that certainly the misery of France increases, which must bring us to a peace. The misery of all the poor people we see is such, that one must be a brute not to pity them. May you ever be happy, and I enjoy some few years of quiet with you, is what I daily pray for."

According to the terms of capitulation, 4000 men, the remains of the garrison, retired into the citadel; the sick and wounded were conducted to the neighbouring towns of France, under con-

dition of sharing the fate of their fellow-soldiers, and the possession of Tournay was consigned, in form, to the earl of Albemarle, who was appointed governor.

On the surrender of the town, no time was lost in prosecuting the siege of the citadel, and the line of circumvallation was contracted the same evening. But the difficulties of this operation were much greater than those attending the siege of the town; for the garrison was sufficient to defend a place comparatively so small in extent, and dangerous of approach, from its numerous mines. However, a new attack was opened against it on the side of St. Martin's gate, under the direction of Schulemburg.

Hitherto the attempts of count Lottum, to discover the mines, had been unsuccessful, for he had only gained two feet of the gallery belonging to the bastion Dauphine. The governor, however, no sooner retired to this fortress, than he drew a new parallel, and opened a heavy fire of shells to favour the establishment of his batteries. A trench was also pushed, on the night of the 4th of August, to the salient angle of the bastion de la Reine.

To preserve so admirable a piece of fortification, as well as to spare the effusion of blood, the commandant proposed that the attack should be converted into a blockade, and that the citadel should surrender, if not relieved before the termination of a month. He requested permission from the allied generals to dispatch a messenger to Versailles for the approbation of his sovereign. Marlborough and Eugene, with their characteristic humanity,

declared their consent; and the former observes, in a letter to the duchess, —

"*Aug. 5.* * * * * We should have marched this day, but for a proposition M. de Surville† has made to prince Eugene and myself of sending an officer to Paris, for the obtaining of the king's leave for the surrendering of the citadel the 5th of the next month, in case they should not be relieved before that time. We have given a pass to the officer, so that we are to have an answer by the 8th. I should be glad the king would approve of their proposition, since it will save the lives of a great many men, and we can't hope to take it much sooner. If the king consents, I think it is a sign he will have peace; for this is the strongest place he has."

This proposition was doubtless made with a view to gain time, and amuse the allies; for Louis refused his consent, unless a cessation of arms should be proclaimed throughout all the Netherlands, and in the mean time he offered to resume the negotiations for peace. The allied generals were not, however, induced to suspend their operations by this overture, and redoubled their efforts on the arrival of the answer from France, which they rejected as inadmissible. About the same time, Marlborough advanced the army near to the lines of Douay, and took up his head quarters at Orchies.

As the peculiarity of this siege arose not so

* Villars falsely asserts that this proposition came from the allied generals. We are sorry to observe that his Memoirs abound with such mis-statements.

much from the strength of the fortification as from the multiplicity of the subterraneous works, which were more numerous than those above ground, we cannot enter into a specific detail of the destructive combats and explosions which took place in what the french biographer calls "*this infernal labyrinth.*" Since the discovery of globes of compression, the danger of mines have been considerably diminished; but at the period of this siege this species of service was the most horrible which imagination could conceive. The miners frequently met and fought with those of the enemy, and sometimes the troops mistaking friend for foe, killed their fellow-soldiers; sometimes whole companies entered the mines at the very moment when they were ready primed for explosion. They were often inundated with water, suffocated with smoke, or buried alive in the cavities and left to perish; on some occasions whole battalions were blown into the air, and their limbs scattered to a distance like lava from a volcano.

A quotation from "Dumont's Military *History" will give a lively and striking picture of this terrific warfare.

"On the 15th M. de Surville made a sally and drove the besiegers from a post they had taken; but being repulsed, and a hundred and fifty men taking possession of the lodgment, the enemy sprung a mine, blew them all into the air, and overturned all the gabions. In the night, between the 16th and 17th, there happened a long and fierce

* Vol. ii. p. 104.

combat in the mines, which ended at last in favour of the besiegers. On the 20th M. de Surville caused a wall to be blown up which hung over a sap, and thereby smothered a captain, a lieutenant, thirty soldiers, and five miners. On the 23d, a mine was discovered, the opening of which was 60 paces in length, and 20 feet in depth, which would have blown up a whole battalion of hanoverian troops; but the same night the besieged sprung another, which was beneath it, and did a great deal of mischief. On the 26th, an inhabitant of Tournay went to the earl of Albemarle, and offered to discover one of the principal mines of the citadel, on condition he would make him head gaoler of all the prisons in Tournay: this was agreed to, and the man performed what he had undertaken, so that three hundred men were posted in the mine, with eight hundred in the town ditch to support them; but in the middle of the night, M. de Megrigny sprung two mines, one immediately under the large mine, in which all the three hundred men before-mentioned were stifled; the other threw up part of the ditch, and buried a hundred men."

The miners of the confederates not being sufficiently numerous, the regular troops were obliged to assist in the service; but many of these, who had bravely faced visible dangers, recoiled from these subterraneous attacks with that feeling of horror which is naturally augmented by uncertainty and darkness. Such was their reluctance, that Eugene and Marlborough visited the trenches in person, and encouraged their troops to venture on

so appalling a service. Great rewards were offered to stimulate their ardour, and Eugene employed 200 miners who had been engaged in the defence of Turin, and who, pushing into the works, were followed with greater confidence by the more inexperienced soldiers. At length, the skill and perseverance of the assailants triumphing over all obstructions, the small garrison, exhausted by fatigue and famine, beheld with dismay the progress of the approaches, and breaches made preparatory to a general assault.

On the 31st, in the morning, Marlborough had the satisfaction to perceive white colours hung out as a sign of capitulation, and a parley took place in the house of the earl of Albemarle, and in the presence of the two commanders. But their demands, that the garrison should surrender prisoners of war, being rejected, the conference ceased, hostilities recommenced, and the besieging batteries poured their fire upon the citadel with increasing effect. This vigorous effort, joined to the want of provisions, and the dread of a general assault, in which no quarter would be given, forced at length the commandant to surrender at discretion. The two generals, respecting the bravery of the garrison, mitigated the hardship of their lot, by permitting them to march out with the honours of war, retaining their swords and baggage, on the condition of leaving behind them their other arms and colours. They were to return to France, and not to serve till an equal number of prisoners, captured from the allies, were restored in exchange. On the 3d of September the gate of the citadel was

delivered to the confederates, and on the 5th the garrison was conducted to Condé.

Thus ended this memorable and destructive siege. The possession of Tournay, a rich and populous city, was rendered more valuable by the acquisition of a province in the French Netherlands, remarkable for the fertility of its soil, and its numerous manufactures. In a military point of view it was peculiarly important, as it covered Spanish Flanders.*

* For the account of this siege and the previous operations, have been consulted, the letters of Marlborough — The accounts in the Gazettes — Memoirs of Villars — Brodrick — Kane — Lediard, and the french biographer— The Complete History of Europe — Lives of Eugene and Marlborough; and Vie du Prince Eugene, 4 tomes.

CHAPTER 81.

1709.

Movements before the battle of Malplaquet.

Before the citadel of Tournay capitulated, the two confederate generals resumed the design which they had previously formed, of besieging Mons, the capital of Hainault, which was both ill supplied with troops, and scantily provisioned. They had already matured the necessary preparations for the accomplishment of an object no less difficult than the siege of Tournay; because it was necessary to force the lines which extended from Mons behind the Trouille to the Sambre, and which could easily be defended should Villars suspect their design, as he had a much shorter distance to traverse. Having turned their eyes to the hostile position, and attentively examined the measures taken by the french marshal to cover the western frontier of France, the lines, abatis, inundations, and redoubts, which concealed or defended his front, they concluded that it would be impossible to attack him with a prospect of success. But the eye of genius sees omissions, and discovers resources which are imperceptible to ordinary intellects. While Villars deemed himself unassailable, behind his defences

on the Scheld and the Scarpe, they perceived that he had not paid sufficient attention to those on the Trouille, and they hoped by a combination of rapid movements to force this obstacle, invest Mons, and perhaps engage him in a battle.

On the 31st of August, anticipating the surrender of the citadel, the duke detached lord Orkney from the camp at Orchies, with all the grenadiers of the army, and 20 squadrons. He was to attempt the surprise of St. Ghislain, and secure the passage of the Haine; but, if he failed, to occupy the opening between the woods of Etambruges and Bandour, in order to mask the intended movements of the main army.

On the 3d of September, after the capitulation of the citadel, the prince of Hesse Cassel was dispatched at four in the afternoon with 60 squadrons of horse, and 4000 foot, under the command of general Dedem. He was to follow lord Orkney, and if he found him master of St. Ghislain, to pass the Haine and invest Mons on the south-west; but should that fortress remain in the possession of the enemy, he was to take a circuitous route by Nimy and Obourg, and effect his purpose by forcing the ill-guarded lines on the Trouille.

At nine in the evening, Cadogan marched with 40 squadrons in the same direction. At midnight the two confederate armies broke up from Orchies, and moved in two columns by the left, while the principal part of the besieging corps quitted the vicinity of Tournay, leaving 26 battalions under Lottum, Schulemburg, and Wood, to superintend the evacuation of the citadel, to observe the move-

ments of Villars, and, when he quitted his position, to reinforce the main army.

The besieging corps from Tournay crossed the Scheld on the bridges of the town; the grand army in two divisions, by those of Anthoine and Mortagne. The different columns joined on the march, and halted in front of Brissoeul, where they encamped on the 4th, in two lines. The next day a violent autumnal storm deluged the camp, and inundated the roads; yet the army resumed their march by the left to Siraut, and the tents were pitched fronting the Haine, at the distance of three miles from that river. Here they were joined by lord Orkney, who had approached St. Ghislain at break of day on the same morning; but finding De Legal with seven battalions prepared to receive him, had contented himself with preventing all communication across the river.

Notwithstanding the severity of the weather, the prince of Hesse had prosecuted his march with unremitting ardour. Finding that the attempt on St. Ghislain had failed, he proceeded north of the Haine by Nimy, and taking advantage of the woods of St. Denis, to mask his dispositions, passed the Haine near Obourg at two in the morning of the 6th. * His troops rested on their arms in the meadows and orchards behind the woods, while

* To convey an idea of the extraordinary rapidity of this march, we may compute the distance from the camp of Orchies to Brissoeul 5 leagues, to Siraut 4, to Havre 6: the Brabant leagues being about 3½ miles each, 14 leagues amount to 49 english miles, which the prince of Hesse performed in 56 hours, through bad roads, and in a rainy season. Milner observes that they scarcely halted in the whole course of the march.

some squadrons observed the avenues from Mons over Mount Palisel. At seven he moved forward in columns across the hill behind St. Simphorien to Espiennes in the valley, and at noon entered the lines of the Trouille without opposition.

Marshal Villars had received early intelligence of the prince's march, and taken measures, though too late, to oppose him. He sent orders that a detachment from Mons should advance to the defence of the lines; directed the chevalier de Luxembourg, who was stationed near Condé with 30 squadrons, and the brigade of Picardy, to draw towards the Trouille, and ordered Legal to support him. On the 6th the chevalier was in full march to the lines, which were then only protected by three regiments of dragoons and the detachment from Mons. Next day, while he was advancing in the vicinity of Ciply, he discovered the Hessian prince entering the valley of the Trouille, near Espiennes, in such apparent force that he deemed his own detachment not sufficiently strong to dispute the passage. He therefore sent to Legal, who had reached Bousou, to hasten to his assistance; but that officer did not venture to quit his post near St. Ghislain, as the confederate army had already reached the vicinity of Siraut. Luxembourg accordingly directed the three regiments of dragoons to fall back to his corps, and the detachment of infantry from Mons to return to the garrison. Thus the prince of Hesse received the best reward a skilful and active commander can obtain, success without bloodshed. He fixed his head quarters at the abbey of Belian, and extended his

post, from Jemappes towards Frameries.* By this movement he intercepted the communication between Mons and the army of Villars.†

During these skilful and vigorous operations, Villars had decamped from the lines of Douay, soon after mid-day on the 3d, with the cavalry of the right wing, consisting of the body-guards; and directing the infantry to follow, with the utmost speed, he passed the Scheld at Valenciennes, and reached Quevrain at two in the morning of the 4th. He posted his cavalry in order of battle, waiting in anxious suspense the movements of his antagonists. From hence he sent orders to his left wing, to take up the position abandoned by his right, with directions to observe the strength and intentions of the hostile corps, which still remained under the walls of Tournay.

With the hopes of arriving in time to support Luxembourg, he moved on the 5th towards the Trouille; but receiving a report in the evening, announcing the appearance of the allies near St. Simphorien, he fell back to cover the centre of his lines.‡ He could now no longer doubt the real in-

* Gazette.

† The position chosen by the prince of Hesse was well adapted to its object. The right being on the heights near Jemappes (where the austrian right was posted in 1792), cut off the road from Mons to Valenciennes, and overlooked the plain of St. Ghislain, and the defiles of Wasmes and Paturages. The centre crossed the roads to Bavay and Maubeuge, and commanded a view of the two openings of Aulnoit and Louviere, and the left covered the communication with the grand army beyond the Trouille.

Personal Observations by major Smith.

‡ A considerable controversy has arisen among the french historians and tacticians respecting the cause which occasioned the ill defence of these lines, each party throwing the blame on the other. As it does

tentions of his opponents; but his infantry had not joined, and therefore he drew up on the height above St. Ghislain and Bousou till the 6th, when about mid-day he returned to Quevrain, whither Albergotti had marched with 40 battalions. Villars remained in position behind the Honeau till the next day, when d'Artagnan with the left wing arrived. He then re-crossed the rivulet, and encamped in two lines between Montroeul and Attiche. He was still perhaps in time to advance and secure the plain of Mons, had not the infantry of his left been exhausted by forced marches.

Meanwhile the confederate army, after a repose of a few hours in rain and mud, moved on the 6th from Siraut in two columns by the left. Soon after, information was received that the prince of Hesse had crossed the Haine, and was about to attack the lines. Upon this intelligence the march was accelerated, the confederate generals advanced with considerable speed towards Obourg and Havre, and made instant preparations for completing the investment of Mons. Count Tilly, with the forces of Marlborough, crossed the Haine, and encamped between Obourg and Hyon; while general de Vehlen, with the imperialists, remained near the woods of St. Denis, and detached a corps to mask Mons on the side of Nimy. At the same time the generals themselves pushed forward with an escort of horse, to join the prince of Hesse, and passing the lines at Espiennes, found this gallant

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not fall within our province to decide this controversy, we refer the reader to the Memoirs of Villars, Quincy, &c. &c.

officer in his head quarters at the abbey of Belian. Both Eugene and Marlborough complimented him on the complete success of his expedition, to which he modestly replied, "The french have deprived me of the glory due to such a compliment, since they have not even waited my arrival." The outposts of the advanced guard were then pushed forward to Paturages, Genly, Quevy, and Cauchie, in order to observe with particular attention the defiles of Wasmes and St. Ghislain, and the roads leading through the woods of Montroeul, Blangies, and Sart.

Mons was thus invested on the side of France, and thus was the french marshal again baffled by the superior activity and skilful manœuvres of his great antagonists. The place itself was scantily provided, ill prepared for defence, and the garrison so sickly, that Villars called it the hospital of his army.

It was evident, therefore, that the hostile commanders would leave no means untried to avert the siege, or at least to throw reinforcements into the town, even at the risk of a battle. On the 7th marshal Boufflers arrived in the french camp, with the intention of giving a noble example of devotedness to his king and country, by serving under Villars in the quality of a volunteer, although he was his senior in rank. Upon a nation so susceptible of enthusiastic emotions, this testimony of genuine patriotism had an electric effect, and from the spirit thus excited, Villars anticipated, with sufficient reason, the most happy consequences. The bustle and rejoicings which it

produced in their camp inducing the allied outposts to conjecture that an attack was preparing, the prince of Hesse communicated the information to Marlborough and Eugene, as they were sitting down to dinner at head quarters. They immediately mounted their horses, and issued orders for Marlborough's forces in the vicinity of Havre to march left in front, leaving the baggage behind and the tents standing. A detachment of Eugene's corps undertook to mask Mons on the east, and the rest crossed the Haine, and followed the columns of the dutch and british. After passing the lines and the Trouille at Espiennes, the leading columns halted on the heights above the village, till the troops of Eugene arrived; while the prince of Hesse concentrated his corps on the hill of Bertiamont, having his right at Quasmes, and his left extended towards the Trouille. Meantime farther information arrived, that the enemy had not moved from Quevrain. The two armies were therefore ordered to pass in the rear of the hessian prince to Ciply and Noirchin, and bivouac on the spot in order of battle, with the right above Ciply, and the left near Little Quevy. Intelligence having reached Marlborough that the garrison of Mons consisted of only nine incomplete spanish, and two bavarian battalions, with the dragoons of Pasteur, he concluded that the forward movement of Villars was only a feint to induce the confederates to concentrate their forces in the neighbourhood of Belian, while he pushed a reinforcement into the fortress by way of Jemappes. To frustrate this design, a strong detachment was sent

forward to Quaregnon and the heights above St. Ghislain.

At a council of war on the 8th, it was determined to secure the plain of Mons; and as marshal Villars menaced to advance with his right through the opening between the woods, near Aulnoit and Blaregnies, and his left through the defiles of Bousou and Wasmes, it was deemed expedient that Marlborough should mask the former, and Eugene the latter. Accordingly the whole army marched in several columns. As these vast and magnificent masses of different nations moved over the bold swellings of an undulating plain, the advanced guard fell in with the french hussars, and a report was spread that the enemy were approaching. The heads of the columns were therefore instantly turned towards their centre, and the whole army was suddenly brought in view, forming a vast crescent of 90,000 men, and affording a military spectacle seldom equalled. At night the imperialists occupied the heights of Quaregnon, and the duke moved his right in front of Genly, his left resuming nearly the former position about Quevy.

In the vicinity of an enemy just roused to enthusiasm, the advanced parties of the confederates could make no movement without repeated skirmishes, and small but sanguinary conflicts, the usual preludes to the awful bursting of the storm. The success was various, and many prisoners were taken on both sides. Among the captures of the day was the french brigadier-general Sheldon, by whom Marlborough was apprised that Villars had

obtained the consent of his court to risk a general battle.

The two opposing armies being now collected near the spot which was soon to exhibit the most stupendous conflict of this eventful war; we submit to the reader a description of the surrounding country and field of battle.

That portion of the province of Hainault, which was the theatre of these operations, may be represented as a species of parallelogram, of which the angular points are Mons, Quevrain, Bavay, and Givry. It is traversed by several streams, of which the principal are the Haine, the Trouille, the Honeau, and the Hon. The grounds rise from the Haine into a hilly surface, intersected by valleys and ravines, which becoming still more broken towards Blaregnies, Malplaquet, and Quevy, are watered by numerous streamlets derived from marshy sources, and flowing into the Upper Trouille at Hyon. Over this surface are scattered numerous villages and hamlets, and except a small plain or heath, near Malplaquet, the whole face of the country is well cultivated, or covered with woods and coppices, the remains of a forest originally extensive.

Of these woods, two deserve particular mention. The first stretches from Longueville, in a north-eastward direction to Cauchie, and is called the wood of Laniere. It is traversed by few roads, except the great causeway leading from Tongres to Maestricht, known by the name of Chaussée Brunehaud. The second, which is still larger, extends

from the Chaussée de Bois towards the village of Bousou, and bears different names, from the surrounding hamlets: the south-eastern angle is denominated the wood of Taisniere. Within the space between these woods, are two glades or openings, called *trouées* in the language of the country. The first, *Trouée* de la Louviere, is formed by a plain, bounded on the south-east by the Hon and the Honeau, which narrows as it approaches the angle of the wood of Taisniere, where a streamlet forms a ravine crossing the plain near the farms of Camperdu and Louviere. Eastward, towards Malplaquet, in the wood of Laniere, is the second opening, which spreads partly along a hollow ground, formerly bounded by a hedge, and named *Trouée* d'Aulnoit, from the village of that name, near which is Blaregnies, and a little beyond, the small wood of Tiry. Still farther down the plain is the wood of Cliou, and to the west the village and wood of Sart. These places are divided from each other by ravines, formed by rills which rise near the top of the plain. Towards the north, on the western side of the plain, is another opening, called *Trouée* de Bousou, between the point of the wood which terminates near the village and the Haine: it is also intersected by a rivulet. Advancing still nearer to Mons, two other rivulets occur, which form the passes of Wasmes and Quaregnon, and beyond is the defile of Jemappes. The features of the ground may therefore be said to form a species of natural barrier, stretching across the angle, comprised between the Trouille and the Haine, and pervious only by the two

openings of Louviere and Aulnoit, both equally difficult of access.*

Such was the ground on which Marlborough and Eugene deployed their magnificent army, amounting on the day of battle to 129 battalions and 252 squadrons, with 101 pieces of cannon, and 4 mortars, making a numerical force of about 93,300 men.† The troops consisted of various nations, differing in language, religion, and manners, but

* For the topographical particulars relative to the field of Malplaquet and its immediate vicinity, major Smith was principally indebted to the superb original plan in the king's library, to which is annexed a long explanation. The construction was completed by an excellent plan of the environs of Mons, designed by the austrian quarter-master general's department, and by a personal inspection of the ground which he reconnoitred in 1814, as far as Ciply, Frameries, Wasmes, and Bousou. He was thus enabled to clear up the confusion thrown on the subject, by the french authors, who have misnamed and misplaced the woods and villages.

† By the order of battle published in Holland, Eugene had brought across the Haine, including the detachment from Tournay,

	59 battalions	110 squadrons
Marlborough	80	143
Total.....	139	253

Of these, 18 battalions blockaded Mons, and occupied St. Ghislain, detaching 1900 men to the army, together with 31 squadrons, part of whom were left to guard the camp equipage, and to mask the debouché of Bousou. This enumeration agrees exactly with the disposition in the plan at the king's library, in that by Bruckman, captain of engineers in the service of Hanover, present at the battle, and in that executed by a member of the dutch quarter-master general's department.

We think it needless to advert to the exaggerated accounts of Villars, Boufflers, Quincy, and their copiers, who, to extenuate the shame of the defeat, employ the indefinite superlatives *infini* and *prodigieux*, to swell the amount of the allied forces beyond all reasonable calculation. Nor shall we, on the other hand, adopt the equally exaggerated accounts of the numbers of the enemy, given by Milner and others, to augment the glory of the victory. From every rational estimate, the numbers on both sides appear to have been nearly equal.

were combined, by the genius and unanimity of the two heroes, into one body, actuated by one will. Subordinate to them were marshal count Tilly, who commanded the dutch troops, the gallant princes of Orange and of Hesse Cassel, generals Schulemburg, Bulau, Lottum, Albemarle, Vehlen, and Fagel. We remark, besides, a train of inferior generals, bred up in the school of their mighty masters: among these, history is familiar with the names of Cadogan, Argyle, Lumley, the prince of Auvergne, Dohna, Oxenstiern, Spaar, Rantzau, Aurochs, Withers, Stair, Grovestein, and Hamilton; and perhaps it may not be improper to add the prince royal of Prussia, and the youthful heroes, Saxe, Munich, and Schwerin.*

Villars, on the other hand, was encamped between Montroeul and Attiche, with the defiles of Bousou and the woods in his front, and with forces not inferior in number. In his army he counted no less than 130 battalions and 260 squadrons, and was provided with a train of 80 pieces of †cannon.

* Young count de Saxe served with the saxon light dragoons under Eugene; Schwerin was an ensign in the dutch regiment of Schwerin, his uncle; and Munich was captain in a hessian regiment.

† This estimate, given by Quincy, is corroborated by the letter of Villars to the king, vol. ii. p. 87. in which he allows Albergotti to have 40 battalions, and d'Artagnan, who had not then joined, at least two-thirds of the whole infantry, that is above 80 battalions; therefore, in all, he must have had *more* than 120 battalions. The authors who wrote out of France, and even some of that nation, allow that the sufferings of the people had rendered recruiting very successful; and as no sanguinary action had yet occurred during the campaign, the strength of the respective corps must have been equal to that of the allies; in cavalry it indeed appears they were rather superior. Besides it must be recollected, that Villars had increased his army by draining the garrisons of Ypres, Dunkirk, Aire, Douay, Arras, and Cambray.

In this camp were collected the choicest troops in the french service, the gardes du corps, mousquetaries, light horse, horse grenadiers, and gens d'armes: among the cavalry of the line were the carabineers; among the infantry, the french and swiss guards, the bavarian and cologne guards, and the irish brigade. Villars was assisted by the matured experience of marshal Boufflers, and under him served lieutenant-generals d'Artagnan, Legal, Chemeraut, Puysegur, Guebriant, counts Villars, Albergotti, and Palavicini. The names of St. Hilaire and Folard adorn the page of history and the annals of science. With these were young Coigny, the duke de Guiche, and let us add the youthful pretender, under the name of the chevalier de St. George, combining the graces of person, with the valour hereditary in the Stuart race. It thus seemed as if the chivalry of Europe had spontaneously assembled, to swell the opposing armies, and contend for the laurels of victory.*

On the morning of the 8th, Villars learnt that Mons was invested, and that the army of Eugene was still encamped on the heights of Quaregnon. Anxious to recover the communication with the fortress, he hoped to compel the allies to change their position, by threatening the lines on the Trouille, and to try his fortune through the openings of La Louviere and Aulnoit, the only avenue which he expected to find accessible. Having

* Among the french nobles present at this battle, we find no fewer than twelve who were afterwards marshals of France: Artagnan, marshal de Montesquiou; De Guiche, marshal de Grammont; Puysegur; Montmorenci; Coigny; Broglio; Chaulnes; Nangis; Isenghien; Duras; De la Motte Houdancourt; and Senneterre.

sent his baggage to the rear behind the Ronelle, he dispatched, in the evening of the 8th, an officer with an escort of 200 horse, in the rear of the woods, to the farm of La Louviere. At eight in the evening the ordinary relief of the out-posts, commanded by the colonel of hussars d'Aremberg, marched in the same direction, sustained by the chevalier de Luxembourg, with orders to occupy the opening between the woods. On the morning of the 9th, the french marshal was apprised that the allies still remained in their former positions. Before five he therefore detached Chemerault with 1000 grenadiers, the brigades of Picardie and Poitou, 1000 horse, and two regiments of dragoons. The whole army followed in four columns, by the right, through Dour, Montignies, and Attiche, the two columns of infantry, each preceded by a brigade of artillery, and the two of cavalry, each by one of dragoons. Count Broglio commanding the rear-guard, which consisted of the reserve, kept all the out-posts standing, and formed on the heights of Bousou. At ten the columns occupied the opening of La Louviere. The grenadiers and advanced battalions, protected by a corps of cavalry, then crossed the plain of Malplaquet to the wood of Laniere, and drew up facing the opening of Aulnoit, in front of the position occupied by Marlborough.

Meanwhile the confederate generals were not inattentive to the movements of the enemy. Early in the morning of the 9th, they assembled at the mill of Sart, to reconnoitre with an escort of 30 squadrons, and were accompanied by Goslinga,

one of the dutch deputies. Reports were brought that the enemy were assembling on the heights of Bousou, but they soon discovered, from prisoners and deserters, that the whole hostile army was in full march, toward the plain of Malplaquet, and that Villars himself was in the act of occupying Laniere, Taisniere, and Sart. Soon after, the patroles and out-posts reported that his columns were discerned at the distance of a league and a half. Returning therefore towards the left, Marlborough ordered his army to advance from Little Quevy and Genly, the right towards Sart, and the left to the wood of Laniere. On reaching their ground, the french cavalry were observed in several lines, drawn up across the opening, and some slight skirmishes took place. The head-quarters were fixed at Blaregnies, in the rear of the centre. Meantime the heads of the french columns of infantry halted on the plain of Malplaquet, and their rear advanced with the utmost expedition, to close the line of march.

While Villars was engaged in arranging his disposition, the left of Marlborough approached so near his right, that at two in the afternoon a cannonade commenced. Now was the golden moment of attack, before the french could increase the natural strength of their position by intrenchments; but the difficulty of Eugene's immediate junction with his troops from Quaregnon, seems to have suspended the engagement. Eighteen battalions of his left wing, however, received orders to reinforce the duke; and in this awful interval, a

council of war * was assembled, at which were present two of the dutch deputies, Hooft and Goslinga. After much debate, and considerable opposition from these deputies, and several of the generals, the opinion of Marlborough and Eugene prevailed †; that if the enemy did not attack, they should force them to an engagement, as soon as the whole of Eugene's army could join, and the troops from Tournay were within reach. It was likewise determined to complete the blockade of Mons, and for the purpose of maintaining a direct communication with Tournay, and securing an additional point of retreat, it was also resolved to attack St. Ghislain by escalade, an enterprise the more feasible, as Villars had withdrawn the greater part of the garrison. Accordingly on the 10th, general Dedem marched with a detachment from the blockading corps, and accomplished the capture, with equal vigour and promptitude, taking the post with 200 prisoners, and 5 pieces of cannon.

In the mean time the french reserve and out-

* So many vague and contradictory accounts have been published of the debates in this council of war, that we have given only the result, and refer the reader for particulars to Lediard, The Life of Eugene, &c.

† It is singular that circumstances somewhat similar were the subject of debate in the council of war before the battle of Jemappes, in 1792, when the army of Dumouriez was posted, like that of Villars, behind the woods of Taisniere and Laniere. The austrian quarter-master-general, judging like Marlborough and Eugene, advised the prince of Saxe Teschen to attack, notwithstanding the inferiority of his forces; because the austrians, being disciplined and manœuvring troops, could operate in conjunction against the raw, unwieldy masses of the revolutionary army, and by passing through the opening of Aulnoit, fall upon a part only, leaving at the same time space for a retreat. His advice being overruled, the austrians awaited the attack, and were defeated.

posts broke up from Bousou and followed their army. When the direction of their march was ascertained, the other troops of Eugene quitted Quaregnon, marching by the left towards Ugies, and after bivouacking during the night, joined the right of Marlborough on the ensuing morning.

Villars, however, instead of attacking the allies, as Marlborough had at first expected, established himself in a defensive position. He resolved to form a concentric order of battle, across the highest ground in the opening of Aulnoit, with the wings projecting along the skirts of the wood on either side. He purposed to cover the flanks and centre with intrenchments, so disposed, that cross fires might sweep the little plain on every point, and, to use the expression of Dumont, render its approach an infernal gulf. His right, therefore, occupied in force the wood of Laniere, and made abatis across the Chaussée Brunehaud. From the skirt of this wood, along the little plain south of the farm of Bleron, is a slight hollow, at that time bounded by a hedge, which terminated near the chapel of Jean Vauquier, and which, having been the point first occupied by the french grenadiers, now became the line of the intrenchments. One was constructed along a great part of its length; and a second, projecting in a point, some hundred paces in front, extended near Bleron. Between both was placed a heavy battery, and behind the hedge was constructed a third intrenchment, besides several detached and connecting works, traverses and abatis, according to the nature of the ground, or the thickness of the wood. From the

end of these works near the chapel, where the ground rises to a summit, nine *redans* were constructed, with openings between, sufficient to allow cavalry to advance and charge. Before the centre of the redans was a battery of 20 guns, which swept the plain to right and left; and at the western extremity a small marshy source of a rivulet, close to the wood of Taisniere, which constituted the left of the centre. The contiguous woods of Taisniere and Sart, projecting before the general line of the position, formed a salient and a returning angle, a part of which was faced by the rivulet. These two angles were covered with similar intrenchments and abatis, and on this side were raised two more batteries, while several smaller pieces were distributed along the line.

On the plains in the rear other lines were constructed, at Malplaquet on the right, and *Chaussée de Bois*, behind the wood on the left. Upon these works great labour was bestowed, and continued, even till the signal was given for battle. The troops who constructed them, and were destined to defend them, were posted in the following order: d'Artagnan, senior lieutenant-general, commanded the right wing of the infantry, stationed in the wood of Laniere, and the triple lines of Malplaquet; under him were lieut.-generals d'Hautifort, Guiche, and Tresilliere, with eight brigades; some grenadiers, and two battalions of Boufflers, formed the extreme right; next followed the brigades of Bourbonnais, Piémont, Royal, and the Swiss of Bandell. Beyond these, in front of the chapel, were the french and swiss guards. Imme-

diately behind the Bourbonnais was the brigade of Navarre, and in the rear, the second line, in order of battle. The avenues to their right were encumbered with hedges, ditches, and hollows; but behind it was a space sufficient for 25 squadrons to draw up in line; this ground, as well as the whole of the rear, was cleared from all obstacles which might impede their movements. Next to the brigade of guards, who had the left of the right wing, were the irish brigades of Lee and O'Brian, while the bavarian and cologne guards occupied the redans along the centre. Brigadier de Steckemberg, at the head of the brigade of Laonois, and supported by that of Alsace, maintained the intrenchment which projected in a point. The right of the brigade of Alsace rested on a breastwork and battery which enfiladed the opening. The left wing occupied the eastern fringes of the woods at Taisniere and Sart, following the angles of the intrenchments and hedges. The brigades of Bretagne and L'Esparre formed the right, nearly in prolongation of the centre, behind the source of the rivulet. Next followed the brigades Du Roi and Champagne facing the plain, the left flank of the latter resting on the angle of the wood. To the left of these, and thrown back towards the rear, were the brigades of Picardy and La Marine Royale, flanking an opening in the wood; and in front of their left, across the road from Blaregnies to Chaussée du Bois, were La Reine and Charost, the left of which last rested on a marshy source. In their rear, the brigades of Gondrin, Tourville, Perche, La Sarre, and one of dismounted dragoons,

formed reserves, or were posted with some others on the plain behind the wood, and in the works of Chaussée du Bois.* The cavalry, drawn up in several lines, as the nature of the ground would admit, stretched along the rear of the whole, from the heath of Malplaquet to beyond the farm of La Folie, near Jean Sart. On the right were the gardes du corps, in the centre the gens d'armes, and on the left the carabineers.

While the french marshal was actively exerting himself to strengthen his position, the two allied commanders and the prince royal of Prussia, passed the night at the quarters of Goslinga, in rear of the dutch, that they might be near in case of alarm. Their forces had been stationed, since the preceding night, in the following order, beginning with the left:—

The dutch infantry and their auxiliaries, commanded by marshal Tilly, and subordinately by the prince of Orange, were posted in two lines, extending from the wood of Laniere, in front of Aulnoit, to the small wood of Tiry: 14 battalions, hanoverians and british, occupied this wood, with the opening between it and the farm of Bleron, within musket-shot of the enemy's lines, but covered by

* Thus far we have followed Quincy, who, without understanding the ground, seems to have had good information relative to the details of the first position of the french army. It agrees with the position marked upon the king's plan, from which, however, have been borrowed some slight additions, to make the disposition more clear. With regard to the names of the woods, and their relative situation, Quincy was doubtless misinformed. The wood of Ransart and Jean Sart is not comprised in that of Laniere, but is a part of the wood of Blangies, and belongs to Trieu Jean Sart near Attiche.

a small rise, as well as by the hedges of the farm, and some brushwood. From the wood of Tiry, the two lines of infantry, composed of british and prussians, were thrown back behind the farm of Cour-Tournant, about which were several detached battalions. The eighteen battalions of Eugene's army, who had arrived in the evening, extended from hence to the farm of Cou, in the direction of Sart. The cavalry were drawn up in two lines behind. The dutch on the left, perpendicularly (*en potence*) with the left wing extended to the farm of Nivergies, the right to the infantry, and the front facing the wood of Laniere. The british, prussian, and hanoverian cavalry were posted in the rear of their respective infantry, and the 18 battalions of Eugene; so that this whole corps formed four lines, in front of Blaregnies. In the morning the corps of Eugene arriving, prolonged the right of the army, already posted, by forming two lines of cavalry in rear of Sart, and in front of the windmill next the infantry; and at the extreme right, the rest of the cavalry extended to beyond the farm of Flegnies near Frameries.

At break of day, the commanders in chief and generals of corps went out to reconnoitre, and were surprised to observe the defences which the enemy had thrown up, since the preceding afternoon. The result of this survey induced Eugene to represent to the council of war which ensued *, the necessity of waiting the arrival of the detachment

* There is some confusion among the accounts of these councils of war; but from the alteration of circumstances, the formidable appearance of the intrenchments, the delay of the detachment marching from

from Tournay; while Marlborough recommended an immediate attack *, before the enemy had rendered their intrenchments complete. But the advice of the prince, supported by the dutch deputies, prevailed, and the remainder of the day was spent in arranging the dispositions. Orders were sent for Schulemburg, Lottum, and Wood, to join the main army, leaving the detachment under Withers to follow with the utmost speed. The commander of each division received specific instructions for his guidance in the conflict, the substance of which will indicate the plan of the chiefs. The onset was to commence on the right of the centre, and the left of the right, where 22 battalions under Lottum, and 40 under Schulemburg, each in three lines, were to attack the two flanks of the intrenchments in the woods of Taisniere and Sart. Half an hour after, 31 battalions of the left wing, consisting principally of dutch infantry, sustained by the 19 battalions drawn from Tournay, under general Withers, were to form in several bodies, and advance against the grenadiers, who covered the right flank of the enemy. Lord Orkney, with 15 battalions in a single line, was to act defensively, at some distance, in front of the opening of the plain, and to move forwards as soon as Lottum and Schulemburg had succeeded. Finally, a corps of

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Tournay, and the absence of the deputy Rantwyck, I have no doubt that two if not three were held between the passage of the Haine and the battle.

* Rousset, who was in the engagement, positively asserts that the duke proposed to attack on the 10th; but though it is not improbable, I can find no proof of it in the duke's letters, or in any other authentic writer. — Lediard, vol. iii. p. 542.

1900 men from the blockading army near Mons, was to traverse Sart, from the source of the marshy rivulet, and aid the general attack, by pressing on the flank and rear of the hostile intrenchments.

To sustain these operations, the prince of Hesse was directed, with 21 squadrons of the dutch first line, to follow the prince of Orange in two lines, between the woods of Laniere and Tiry: and 30 squadrons of the second line of dutch horse, led on by the prince of Auvergne, were to draw up in the rear of lord Orkney's infantry. The british, prussian, and hanoverian cavalry, who were formed according to circumstances, received orders to cover count Lottum; and the whole of Eugene's cavalry to draw up in two lines, for a similar purpose, in the rear of Schulemburg. They were generally instructed to keep out of the reach of grape shot, yet to be sufficiently forward to sustain the infantry. When the intrenchment on the plain was carried, they were to rush forward, to form on the farther side of the lines, to charge the hostile squadrons and drive them from the field. The infantry were enjoined not to penetrate beyond the intrenchments, woods, and obstacles of ground, but to occupy them in force, and afford protection to the cavalry. The heavy artillery was to be distributed in several batteries; 28 pieces in front of the left; 40 in the centre, and the rest with the field pieces to accompany the several brigades, as passages should be effected in the woods. Their fire was ordered to be directed against the intrenchments and opposing batteries,

and the signal of attack, was a volley from the grand battery in the centre.

But the commanders, as they proceeded in their survey, observed that the intrenchments opposite the left were of the most formidable nature, and they learnt that all the troops from Tournay could not reach the field of battle till next morning. They accordingly decided on converting the attack on the left into a feint; and to shorten the march of the expected detachment, general Withers was directed not to join the army, but to leave three battalions, and four squadrons about Paturages, and to march with the remainder between the woods of l'Eveque and Montroeul, for the purpose of turning all the intrenchments raised on the plain behind, and penetrating between Trieu Jean Sart, and the wood by La Folie, into the rear of the enemy's left.

The day was now far advanced, when Villars began to reflect that the measures he had hitherto pursued might fail of the desired effect. He found that he could not discover the situation and movements of his opponent's right, which could attack him on the left, while the opposite flank was masked by the wood of Tiry. * He therefore ordered a new line of intrenchments to be formed, extending from the hamlet of Malplaquet, quite across the plain, to the farm of La Louviere. The cavalry were employed during the whole night in carry-

* To this little wood have been misapplied the various appellations belonging to the woods in the vicinity, Ronsart, Jean Sart, La Merte, &c.; we follow the name on the king's plan, though we doubt the existence of the wood at the present time.

ing fascines to the spot, but the evening approached, before the undertaking could be completed. In the same evening, or during the night, Lottum, Schulemburg, and Wood, reached the confederate army, and assumed their respective commands, and, before day-light, Withers drew to his station near La Folie, with the corps from Tournay under his orders.

CHAPTER 82.

1709.

Battle of Malplaquet. — Retreat of the french.*

As the morning of the eventful eleventh of September began to dawn, a mist overspread the woods, and concealed the armies from each other.

In the camp of the allies divine service was solemnly performed at three in the morning, with the usual marks of devotion, after the example of their chief; silence and order reigned through all the

* *For the Battle of Malplaquet the following Authorities have been consulted and compared:—*

Lediard's Life of Marlborough, 3 vols. 8vo.—Leven van Marlborough, 4 vols. 8vo.—Quincy, Histoire des Guerres de Louis XIV. 6 vols. 4to.—Père Daniel, Histoire de France, 10 vols. 4to.—Vie de Villars, 3 vols. 12mo.—Histoire de la Maison d'Austriche, par le Comte de C., 6 vols. 12mo.—Histoire du Comte de Saxe, par d'Espagnac, 3 vols. 4to.; also Reveries du Comte de Saxe, 2 vols. 4to.—Dumont and Rousset, 3 vols. great folio.—Vie de Marlborough, par ordre de Buonaparte, 3 vols. 8vo.—Tindal's Continuation of Rapin.—Lives of Marlborough and Eugene, 1 vol. 8vo., 1713; and Lives of Eugene and Marlborough, 2 vols. 12mo., 1742.—Vie du Prince Eugene, 4 vols. 12mo., 1750.—Leben und Thaten des Marlborough, 8vo.—Commentaires de Folard, 6 vols. 4to.—Memoires de Feuquières, 4to.—Memoires de Lamberti.—Milner's Journal of Marches and Battles, 8vo.—Vaderlandshe Historie, 25 vols. 8vo.—Brodrick's History of the late War, 8vo.—Kane's Memoirs, 8vo.—Dictionnaire des Sièges, et Batailles,

ranks, as they steadily marched from the bivouac to their posts. Under cover of the fog, the pieces composing the grand battery of the centre were conveyed to the appointed spot, and covered with an epaulement, to prevent an enfilade, while the dutch likewise moved forward their heavy guns, on the left.

The grand guard of the enemy giving instant notice that the allies were making their dispositions for the attack, the french soldiers discontinued working at the intrenchments, and stood to their arms. The troops on both sides, though harassed by fatigue and want of rest, manifested no diminution of their usual spirit, at the approach of this long-expected engagement. The french gave signal proofs of unbounded confidence in their new general, whom they adored, and in whose abilities they confided. Eight campaigns had been successively marked with disasters; all their former leaders had seen their laurels wither before the two

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6 vols. 8vo.—Field of Mars, Dictionary of Battles, &c. 2 vols. 4to.—History of Regiments in the Military Library.—Abrègé de l'Histoire Générale des Provinces Unies, 3 vols. 8vo.—Military History of Great Britain, 2 vols. 8vo.—Life of Marshal Munich, 8vo. (german.)—Biographisches Lexicon alter Preussischen Helden, 4 vols. 8vo.—Barre Histoire Générale d'Allemagne, 4to.—Chronologie historique et militaire, 7 vols. 4to.—Relaas van den slagh bey Taisnière en Malplaquet.—Burnet.—President Henault.—Vie du Prince Eugene, par d'Avrigni.—Vie du prince Eugene, en 5 tomes.——Kort en Naukeurigh verhaal van der lesten velttoght van Jan Willem Frise, P. v. Orange, N. V. 8vo.—Père Daniel Hist. de la milice Française, 2 vols. 4to.—Boyer's Reign of Queen Anne, fol.

great opponents, and the formidable troops that now stood arrayed in their front; yet no sooner was the command entrusted to this favourite chief, than their defeats were forgotten, and they resumed their national ardour, which they testified, as he rode along the ranks, by exclaiming, "Vive le Roi, vive le maréchal de Villars!" Many of the soldiers, though ill supplied with provisions for several days, even threw away their rations of bread, in their eagerness to begin the engagement. At seven Villars mounted his horse, and requested marshal Boufflers to assume the command of the right wing, while he himself superintended the movements of the left.

In the allied camp the national character of the troops was more sedately expressed, by the punctuality of obedience, by the stern frown or contemptuous sarcasm, and by the general exclamation in allusion to the french intrenchments, "that they were again obliged to make war upon moles." The whole army was in readiness to advance before dawn. The commanders in chief, with the prince royal of Prussia, and the deputy Goslinga, surveyed the execution of the preparatory dispositions, in every part of the field.

The fog still lingering on the ground, protracted the moment of onset; but at half-past seven the sun broke forth, and as soon as the artillery could point with precision, the fire opened on both sides, with an animation and effect, indicative of the ardour which reigned in every bosom. In a moment the french household troops in the rear of

the lines had several killed and wounded, and the allied chiefs witnessed similar effects, as they rode along their own ranks, although the two armies were almost concealed from each other, by the intrenchments and inequalities of the ground. Soon after the opening of the cannonade, Villars and Boufflers repaired to their respective posts; and the two confederate generals also separated, Eugene to direct the movements of the right, and Marlborough those of the centre and left.

The attack commenced on the side of the allies, against the right and centre of the french, in two dense columns, the first under the prince of Orange, and the other under count Lottum. Suddenly the dutch column halted, according to orders, and drew up in several lines beyond the reach of grape; while that of Lottum moved forward, regardless of the fire, to the rear of the principal allied battery, and wheeling to the right, formed in three lines. As these columns took their stations, Schulemburg advanced at the head of 40 battalions, ranged in three lines.

After a short pause in the cannonade, the signal of onset was given at nine, by a general volley from the grand battery. Schulemburg instantly advanced along the edge of the wood of Sart, direct upon the projecting point of the enemy's left wing, while Lottum marched round the grand battery, to attack the other face of the angle; and as he cleared the ground, lord Orkney deployed his 15 battalions to cover his left, and face the hostile centre. The three battalions drawn from the

blockading corps before Mons, likewise pressed forward, under the orders of Gauvain, and entered the wood of Sart, unperceived. At this moment Eugene came up to the troops of Schulemburg, and found them passing several streamlets, and entering the wood. They were suffered by the enemy to approach within pistol-shot, and then received a volley which forced several battalions to recoil more than 200 yards. A furious storm of musquetry ensued, and the french brigade of Charost being partly advanced in an abatis, was either driven from its station, or withdrew, to avoid a flank attack. The austrian battalions on the right being impeded by a morass in front, made a circuitous movement, and fell in with the brigade of Gauvain. These corps, thus fortuitously united, began to penetrate into the wood, as fast as the obstructions which they encountered would permit, but were checked by the troops of Charost, and exchanged a vigorous fire of musquetry with the enemy.

Scarcely was this attack begun, before Marlborough, advancing towards the centre, led on in person the troops of count Lottum. At some distance they were greeted by vollies of musquetry from the brigade Du Roi, without shaking the firmness of their ranks; they passed some enclosures, descended the hollow bank of the rivulet, and waded through the swamp under a galling fire. Reaching the foot of the intrenchment, though disordered by the difficulty of the approach, and the loss they had sustained, they made the most furious effort to ascend the breastwork, but were

repulsed by the french troops, who were encouraged by the presence of Villars himself.

Meanwhile, Withers advanced in silence through the woods, in the direction of La Folie, and by this demonstration distracted the attention of the enemy; but as yet not a single shot was fired on that side. Both the first lines of attack on the right having suffered severely, Eugene and Schulemburg filled up the intervals, and extended the flanks with part of the second; they then advanced again, and dislodged the brigades of La Reine and Charost, but could not force those of Picardie and La Marine, notwithstanding the great exertions of the danes, saxons, and hessians. Count Lottum now returned to the attack, while Marlborough placed himself at the head of d'Auvergne's cavalry to sustain him. At this moment the duke of Argyle ordered a british brigade of the second line to extend the left, and the whole renewed the charge. As the attacks embraced a wider front, this fresh brigade came opposite an opening in the intrenchments; but the access was through a marshy spot, almost impassable. While they were entangled in the swamp, the active Chemerault, with twelve battalions, drawn from the second line of the french left centre, passed the intrenchments, and prepared to charge their left flank. But Villars, who was on the border of the wood, remarking Marlborough with his staff, at the head of d'Auvergne's cavalry, galloped forward, and stopped them at the moment when their farther advance would have been fatal. Free on the flank, the left of count Lottum then penetrated the intrench-

ment, turned the right of the brigade Du Roi, and forced the french gradually back in the wood.

The brigades of Champagné and Picardie, pressed by the double assault of Schulemburg on one side, and of Lottum on the other, found a momentary asylum behind an abatis; and the Royal Marine, after a vigorous stand, was compelled to follow their example. The rest retired in disorder through the wood, which was so close, that the lines were broken into parties, and every tree was disputed.

Meantime the appointed half-hour of the first onset had elapsed, when the prince of Orange, impatient of delay, resolved to attack, although not supported by the corps of Withers, and without waiting the consent of marshal Tilly.* In obedience to the particular disposition, issued the preceding evening, the left of the whole front was led by major-general Hamilton, and brigadier Douglas, with four battalions, among whom was the scottish brigade, in four lines, with orders to enter the wood and attack the grenadiers, who covered the right flank of the enemy. Nine battalions, commanded by lieutenant-generals Spaar and Oxenstiern, were to advance against the salient angle of the intrenchment next the wood; and to the right of these, six battalions, in three lines, led by lieutenant-generals Dohna and Heyden, were to carry the battery on the road to Malplaquet.

* Marshal Tilly is scarcely mentioned by historians, and seems to have been little more noticed by his officers. Although he commanded the dutch, all the officers obeyed the young prince of Orange. The marshal was a brave officer, the creature of the party in opposition to the house of Nassau, and consequently jealous, if not hostile, to the young prince.

Generals Welderen and Rank, with four battalions, in two lines, received directions to skirt the hedges of Bleron, and force the intrenchment to the right of the battery. Beyond these, in the inclosures of Bleron, seven battalions, part of which had been destined at first to act defensively under major-generals Pallant and Ammama, were now to advance in three lines, and attack the point of the projecting intrenchment, defended by the brigades of Laonois and Alsace.

The whole was supported by the hereditary prince of Hesse Cassel, with 21 squadrons, in two lines, and preceded by the cannon allotted to that corps. A few squadrons remained between Aulnoit and the farm of Nivergies, to observe the opening in rear of the left. On the word to march, all were instantly in motion, led on by the aspiring prince of Orange, at the head of the first nine battalions, under a tremendous shower of grape and musquetry. He had scarcely advanced a few paces, when the brave Oxenstiern was killed by his side, and several aides de camp, and attendants, successively dropped as he advanced. His own horse being killed, he rushed forward on foot; and as he passed the opening of the great flanking battery, whole ranks were swept away; yet he reached the intrenchment, and, waving his hat, in an instant the breastwork was forced at the point of the bayonet, by the dutch guards and highlanders. But before they could deploy, they were driven from the post by an impetuous charge from the troops of the french left, who had been rallied by marshal Boufflers. At this moment the corps

under Dohna moved gallantly against the battery on the road, penetrated into the embrasures, and took some colours; but ere they reached the front of the breastwork, were mowed down by the battery on their flank. A dreadful carnage took place among all the troops in this concerted attack; Spaar lay dead upon the field, Hamilton was carried off wounded, and the lines, beginning to waver, recoiled a few paces. Deriving fresh spirit from this repulse, the heroic prince of Orange mounted another horse, and when that was shot under him, his native energy was not shaken; he rallied the nearest troops, took a standard from the regiment of Mey, and marched on foot almost alone to the intrenchment. He planted the colours on the bank, and called aloud, "Follow me, my friends, here is your post." Foremost among the assailants was the heir of Athol, the gallant marquis of Tullibardine, followed by his faithful highlanders *; he sought honour in a foreign service, and died the death of heroes. Lieutenant-general Week shared his glorious fate, and the swiss brigadier Mey was severely wounded. Again the onset was renewed, but it was no longer possible to force the enemy; for their second line had closed up, and the whole breastwork bristled with bayonets and blazed with fire. The brigade of Navarre, which had been sent to reinforce the centre, was recalled; and the french soldiers, disregarding the controul of their officers, opened the intrenchment, and made a furious charge. The disordered ranks

* The regiments of Tullibardine and Hepburn.

of the dutch battalions were beat back, over heaps of slain companions; they lost several colours, and their advanced battery fell into the hands of the french.

In this moment of confusion, though pursued by the horse grenadiers, whom Boufflers had sent forward to improve the advantage, they presented so firm a front, as to awe their assailants, and were supported by the prince of Hesse and his brave squadrons. In these attacks near two thousand men were killed, and the number of wounded was still greater; two battalions of blue guards being nearly annihilated.

In the midst of the conflict baron Fagel led on the seven battalions under lieut.-general Pallant, to storm the projecting intrenchment, near the farm of Bleron, through the enclosures which covered the front. Notwithstanding a heavy fire, they reached the breastwork, and drove the brigade of Laonois from the parapet; till meeting with an obstinate resistance from the veteran brigadier Steckemberg and his valiant corps, they were compelled to relinquish the post.

During this unequal conflict, Goslinga had led on the troops with unexampled courage, and witnessing the danger of his gallant countrymen, galloped toward the right to demand assistance. Meeting lieutenant-general Rantzau, who, with four battalions of hanoverians, was posted on the edge of the rivulet near the wood of Tiry, he represented to him the critical situation of the dutch; and when the general stated his positive instructions not to move without orders, he ex-

torted, after much importunity, a reinforcement of two battalions.

While the deputy, not satisfied with this relief, hastened across the field in search of Marlborough, the attack on the left was renewed with the aid of this reinforcement, and the intrenchment carried; but, mowed down as before by grape-shot, and charged by Steckemberg, the assailants were again repulsed with prodigious loss. All the hanoverian officers, except three, were killed or wounded, and the french maintained their post, though with the sacrifice of their best soldiers, and among others, of their veteran chief, who here closed his long and honourable career.

In this anxious crisis, Goslinga met Marlborough, who, leaving Lottum to continue his successful attack, was himself hastening to remedy the disorder on the left. As they rode together to join the prince of Orange, the duke perceived that Rantzau with his two battalions had attacked a party of the enemy, who quitted the intrenchment to occupy an advanced ravine. He likewise remarked the shattered remains of the dutch infantry reluctantly measuring back their steps to the first inclosures, beyond the reach of grape-shot. He accordingly ordered Rantzau to retire to his former post, and not to move again, till he should receive directions from himself. With a heavy heart he beheld many victims of inconsiderate valour, and witnessed with equal concern and admiration, numbers of the wounded dutch returning from the hands of the surgeons, to resume their station in the ranks. Here he was joined by Eugene, bend-

ing likewise his course to the left with no less solicitude. While they were giving precautionary orders to that wing, a british officer arrived from the right, to inform them that the enemy were attacking in turn with great fury, and evident advantage.

During this time Villars had ineffectually summoned reinforcements from his right; for Boufflers was too much weakened, even by his successful resistance, to detach a part of his infantry. Thus reduced to the necessity of drawing troops from his own centre, he reluctantly called the irish brigade, and that of Bretagne to his assistance, and was soon afterwards joined by the brigade of La Sarre. With the aid of these and other reinforcements, a furious charge was made into the wood of Taisniere upon the british and prussians, who recoiled a considerable way before the impetuous onset of the irish. But the nature of the spot upon which they fought, soon divided their ranks and retarded their progress.

At this moment the allied troops were cheered by the return of Marlborough, who, on the intelligence of their critical situation, again hastened to the right of his centre, to co-operate with the attack from the army of Eugene. Meanwhile Schulemburg, having forced his way round the marsh, pushed the enemy gradually before him; and from the thickness of the wood, the fight became rather a multiplicity of skirmishes and single combats, than a regular engagement; the sight of the contending parties being impeded by a thick foliage and a dense atmosphere of smoke.

The troops of the right were also animated by the return of Eugene, who, as he was rallying his men, and gallantly leading them to the charge, was struck by a musket-ball behind the ear. His attendants pressed him to retire, that the wound might be dressed; but the hero replied, " If I am fated to die here, to what purpose can it be to dress the wound? If I survive, it will be time enough in the evening;" and instantly rushed into the thickest of the fire. His presence roused the brave german battalions, and they recovered the lost ground, pressing forwards in great numbers by a kind of opening* between the woods of Sart and Taisniere, along the road to the wood of Jean-Sart. His efforts were now seconded by general Withers, from his station at La Folie. As soon as this corps reached the debouché of the woods of Blangies and Jean-Sart, the squadrons drew up behind the hamlet of La Folie, while four battalions covered their left flank, and secured the avenues on the side of Sart. With the remaining fifteen, Withers passed the little rivulet, crossed a small coppice, and took post in the hedges of La Folie. The danish and saxon squadrons, who composed part of his corps, then advanced, with the intention of flanking the left of the position of Villars; but only six squadrons had formed, when the chevalier du Rosel, at the head of the carabineers, charged and drove them back.

Notwithstanding this repulse, it was the progress of the corps under Withers, which hastened the

* This the French call *une coulie.*

retreat of the enemy's left out of the wood of Taisniere, and alarmed Villars. In the carnage, Chemerault and Pallavicini fell; and the several brigades, fluctuating through the marshes and thickest parts of the wood, were mingled together in considerable disorder. Villars had hastened to sustain them with the irish brigades drawn from the centre, while Albergotti had posted those of Charost and Du Roi, to check Withers in the nearest hedges of the farm of La Folie. To their right was the brigade of Champagne, forming a flank in the last copses, with the left to the marshy streamlet which passes near the farm; in the rear of Champagne, the brigades of Gondrin and Tourville drew up, and behind them was the cavalry on the plain. The regiments of La Reine and Xaintonges supported the brigade Du Roi, and covered its left flank. Before this disposition was arranged, Villars also formed a corps of twelve battalions, in two lines, at fifty paces from the wood.

At this moment Eugene advanced at the head of five german regiments, and opened a destructive fire. They were charged by the french with bayonets, under the immediate direction of Villars; but in the heat of the combat his horse was shot, and a second musket-ball struck him above the knee. Unable to move, he called for a chair, that he might continue in the field, till fainting from the anguish of the wound, he was carried senseless to Quesnoy. Notwithstanding his loss, the allied battalions were driven back to the edge of the wood of Taisniere, from whence they did not again attempt to advance.

Thus, after an obstinate conflict of four hours, the confederate forces only obtained possession of the intrenchments and wood on the enemy's left, but realised so much of their plan, that while they compelled their opponents to employ almost all their infantry on both flanks, they were at liberty to execute the ulterior object of the disposition, by attacking the hostile centre.

The right of Marlborough forming the centre of the allied army, had coolly waited the proper moment of onset. As soon as the enemy began to draw their cannon out of the intrenchments, he ordered lord Orkney to make a decisive effort upon the redans in the centre. This gallant officer, assisted by Rantzau, Vink, and other generals, had gradually advanced in proportion as Lottum gained ground; and behind him was the prince d'Auvergne with 30 squadrons of dutch cavalry in two lines. In their rear was the british cavalry, under lieutenant-general Wood; the prussian and hanoverian, commanded by general Bulau; and the whole imperial cavalry, under the duke of Wirtemberg and count de Vehlen, stood formed in columns, ready to move at the first order. Lord Orkney, advancing in one line, at a single onset took possession of all the redans, overpowering the bavarian and cologne guards, who were left almost unsupported, in consequence of the draughts from the centre to reinforce the left. The heavy battery of the british centre had likewise been brought forward, and turned against these troops.

As soon therefore as the allies were masters of the redans, the guns of the central battery, which

had been directed upon them, moved rapidly to the right and left, and opened a tremendous cannonade across their rear, upon the lines of hostile cavalry drawn up along the plain. The french horse receding, Rantzau, with his two battalions, turned the left flank of the french and swiss guards, and dislodged them. At the same moment the prince of Orange, not daunted by his former repulse, renewed the attack, and the brigades of Laonois and Alsace were driven out of the projecting intrenchment. Meanwhile the prince d'Auvergne passed the french works, and began to form his cavalry.

The crisis of this sanguinary battle was now arrived. The intrepid Auvergne was charged by the hostile cavalry, and though only a part of his front was in line, he withstood the shock and repulsed them. The foremost squadrons of the enemy were dispersed only to make room for nobler champions, who advanced in gallant order; the gay, the vain, yet truly valiant gendarmerie of France, headed by Boufflers. The marshal had remained with his wing, till he received the alarming intelligence that the allies had broken through the centre. Ordering the household horse to follow, he flew to the spot, and found the gens d'armes ready to charge; after a short and cheering address, he placed himself at their head, and darted upon his antagonists, who were extending their lines, in proportion as they came up, through the openings of the redans. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the gallant Auvergne, the allied squadrons were driven back to the intrenchments;

but lord Orkney, having taken the precaution to post his infantry upon the parapets, poured in a most destructive fire, which repulsed the gens d'armes in their turn. Thrice these charges were repeated, and thrice the impetuous assailants were repulsed, by the combined fires of the musquetry, and the cross batteries on the flanks.

In the midst of this arduous struggle Marlborough came up, and led forward a second line of british and prussian cavalry under the command of Bulau and Wood. They fell on the discomfited squadrons who were attempting to withdraw, and would have swept them from the field, but for the advance of a formidable body of 2000 men, consisting of the gardes du corps, light horse, mousquetaires, and horse grenadiers of the royal household.

These gallant cavaliers had hastened from the right to share the dangers of the centre, and were also led to the charge by marshal Boufflers. Their onset was irresistible; they broke through the first and second lines, and threw the third into confusion. But the force of the allies on this point was now opportunely augmented, the whole of Eugene's cavalry having followed at a full gallop in rear of the duke's right wing. The presence of this illustrious hero animated his troops; and by the judicious dispositions of the two commanders, the assailants were outflanked, and being galled by a cross fire from the infantry, retreated to the plain. Their spirit, however, was not subdued: for they still rallied, and renewed the charge several times, though without making any

considerable impression. Glowing with zeal to encounter an enemy worthy of their valour, the allied cavalry moved forward with redoubled ardour, equal in spirit, but superior in numbers, and drove this intrepid and distinguished body behind the rivulet of Camp Perdu.

Before this charge took place, the prince of Hesse had watched with eager impatience the proper moment to act. Observing lord Orkney's advance, and Rantzau's manœuvre upon the flank of the french guards, he pushed forward in column, passed the redans, and wheeling to the left, took the right of the hostile infantry in flank. This daring manœuvre had the desired effect; the enemy crowded to their right, and were again attacked by the prince of Orange, who had re-occupied the intrenchments, with little resistance.

While the marquis de Valière and his noble comrades rallied the household troops, and the rest of the cavalry on the plain, Boufflers cast an anxious and scrutinising eye over the field of battle. He beheld his centre pierced, his right dislodged, the communication with his left cut off, and the ablest officers under his command killed or wounded. Still however his gallant spirit was unwilling to recede, till he received advice that Legal, who commanded the left, was in full retreat with his cavalry, and about 50 battalions under Puysegur; he therefore reluctantly ordered a general retreat in the direction of Bavai. D'Artagnan * marched off in close columns through the

* This brave general, Pierre d'Artagnan, a veteran in the service of Louis XIV. had three horses killed under him in the battle, and was

woods; Boufflers crossed the Hon at Taisniere and the neighbouring hamlet; Luxembourg covered the rear with the reserve. Beyond the woods, on the plain in front of Bavai, the infantry and cavalry rejoined, and after halting to collect the stragglers, and break down the bridges, passed the Honeau in the vicinity of that town. Their left withdrew towards Quevrain, and effected their retreat with little loss, because the allies were too much exhausted and reduced, to pursue them in force. They passed the Honeau at Audrignies and Quevrain, where a brigade of their infantry was posted. In the course of the night they traversed the Ronelle, and gradually re-assembled at a camp between Quesnoy and Valenciennes. This has been justly considered as a masterly retreat, and was applauded by Eugene and Marlborough themselves.

The allied forces, exhausted with fatigue, halted near the field of battle on the plain, stretching from Malplaquet beyond Taisniere. The engagement being so desperate, and little quarter given on either side, not more than 500 prisoners were taken by the allies, except those who were left wounded on the field, and who amounted to about three thousand. Few cannon or colours were captured, and the victory was only manifested by

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deservedly raised to the rank of marshal. Having, soon after this engagement, by the death of a relative, succeeded to the title of Montesquiou, he is from that time distinguished as marshal Montesquiou, a change of title which has occasioned some confusion in military annals. — Dubois, Dict. de la Noblesse Française — Art. Montesquiou.

the retreat of the french, and the subsequent investment of Mons.

The respective losses in this desperate engagement have been, as usual, erroneously stated. Villars, with his wonted exaggeration, estimates the number of killed and wounded at 35,000 on the side of the allies. The official accounts, however, return, of infantry alone, 5544 killed, and 12,706 wounded and missing, making a total of 18,250; and among these 286 officers killed, and 762 wounded. But when we take into account the loss of the cavalry, and consider the obstinate resistance of the french behind their intrenchments, we may conclude that the killed and wounded on the side of the confederates did not fall short of 20,000 men.

Of course the french endeavour to extenuate their loss. In one of his letters to the king, Villars limits it to 6000 men *, and the highest estimate by other french writers gives only 8137 killed, wounded, and prisoners; but, from a comparison of their own authorities, we may reasonably calculate their loss at not less than 14,000 men, exclusive of deserters.

By all the accounts, both of themselves and their opponents, the french displayed prodigious gallantry, and Marlborough himself allows that they

* We quote this passage from the valiant and skilful, but gasconading marshal: "Si Dieu nous fait la grace de perdre encore une pareille bataille, votre majesté peut compter que ses ennemis sont detruits: enfin, comme me le manda M. de Voisin, ce qui avoit paru une bataille perdue, devint une victoire glorieuse, après qu'on en eut connu les circonstances; puisque nous ne perdîmes pas six mille hommes." Mem. de Villars.

fought with great spirit, and made a most obstinate resistance. Though we cannot say, with Villars, that "the enemy would have been annihilated by such another victory," or with Boufflers, "that the french officers performed such wonders as even surpassed human nature," yet we do not wish to derogate from their valour and intrepidity. Nor ought we, on the other hand, to withhold a candid eulogium of the two confederate generals, and of the brave troops who acted under them, extracted from the letter of a french officer of distinction, written soon after the battle. "The Eugenes and Marlboroughs ought to be well satisfied with us during that day; since till then they had not met with resistance worthy of them. They may say, with justice, that nothing can stand before them; and, indeed, what shall be able to stem the rapid course of these two heroes, if an army of 100,000 of the best troops, posted between two woods trebly intrenched, and performing their duty as well as any brave men could do, were not able to stop them one day? Will you not then own with me, that they surpass all the heroes of former ages?"

In considering the consequences of this eventful day, we cannot but applaud the foresight of Marlborough, who before the opening of the campaign had so earnestly pressed for a powerful augmentation of troops. He was conscious that the french were prepared to make their final effort in the Netherlands, and that he should have to contend with a far greater force than he had yet encountered. The battle proved that his calculations were well founded, and that an additional number

of 10,000 men would have more contributed to the advancement of peace, than all the efforts of the ablest negotiators in Europe. The allies, indeed, remained masters of the field; but the laurels of the two great commanders were deeply tinged in blood, and the result of the campaign was far from being commensurate with the sacrifice of so many valuable lives.

Marlborough and Eugene exposed themselves no less on this than on all other occasions, leading the columns into the midst of the fire in the thickest of the danger. "Although," says a german officer, in his letter, "no appearance of jealousy was ever observable between these two accomplished generals, yet on this day it was remarked that each endeavoured to surpass the other in conduct and valour."

Among the persons of rank who shed their blood upon this occasion, the allies lamented lieut.-general baron Spaar, count Oxenstiern, Week, Tettau, and general Goor; brigadier Lallo, and colonel lord Tullibardine. Among the wounded, besides prince Eugene, we find lieuts.-general Spaen and Webb, majors-general Wackerbach and Hamilton; brigadiers Cronstrom and Mey, and colonel sir John Pendergast.

Villars and Boufflers emulated their two great antagonists, and vied in exposing their persons. Villars was severely wounded in the front rank, and Boufflers, like Marlborough, miraculously escaped. The french lost the marquis de Chemerault, baron Pallavicini, count de Beuil, chevalier d'Ervi; colonels Chardon and Moret of the guards;

the marquis de Charost, colonel of the regiment of Saillant d'Estain; count Moncaut d'Autrey, colonel of La Sarre, and colonel Steckemberg of Alsace. Among the wounded, besides marshal Villars, were the young pretender, the duke de Guiche, M. de Tournemine, Albergotti, Courcillon, count Angeunes, the duke de St. Agnan, the marquis de Zele, and the marquis de Gondrin.

CHAPTER 83.

1709.

Siege and capture of Mons.

We have found only two notes from the victorious general written on the field of battle, and in these we do not recognise that high tone of exultation which appeared in those announcing the victories of Blenheim, Ramilies, and Oudenard. The first of these forms part of a letter to the duchess, begun while his mind was occupied in those skilful manœuvres which brought on the engagement. It appears that his wife, in consequence of a violent quarrel with the queen, had importuned him to remonstrate with her majesty on her harsh behaviour, and that the duke, having declined this irksome office, from a conviction that it would be productive of no advantage, her importunities and bitter reproaches, for what she called his unkind refusal, drew from him this reply, which indicates great anxiety of mind. He seems, indeed, to have been more affected by this domestic misunderstanding, than by any apprehension of personal danger or risk of military fame.

" * * * I am obliged to you for the account you give of the building of Blenheim in yours of the 21st, and the farther account you intend me

after the duke and duchess of Shrewsbury have seen what is done. You will see by my former letters, as well as by this, that I can take pleasure in nothing as long as you continue uneasy and think me unkind. I do assure you, upon my honour and salvation, that the only reason why I did not write was, that I am very sure it would have had no other effect than that of being shewn to Mrs. Masham, by which she would have had an opportunity of turning it as she pleased; so that when I shall speak to the queen of her harsh behaviour to you, she would have been prepared. I beg you to be assured, that if ever I see the queen, I shall speak to her just as you would have me; and all the actions of my life shall make the queen, as well as all the world, sensible that you are dearer to me than my own life; for I am fonder of my happiness than of my life, which I cannot enjoy unless you are kind.

" Having writ thus far, I have received intelligence that the french were on their march to attack us; we immediately got ourselves ready, and marched to a post some distance from our camp; we came in presence between two and three o'clock yesterday, in the afternoon; but as there was several * * * † between us, we only cannonaded each other. They have last night intrenched their camp, by which they shew plainly that they have changed their mind, and will not attack us; so that we must take our measures in seeing which way we can be most troublesome to them. This

† Illegible.—Probably woods or heights.

afternoon the regiments which made the siege of Tournay will join us, and then we shall have all the troops we can expect; for those we have left for the blocking up of Mons must continue where they are. I do not yet know if I shall have an opportunity of sending this letter to-night, if not, I shall add to it what may pass to-morrow. In the mean time, I can't hinder saying to you, that tho' the fate of Europe, if these armies engage, may depend upon the good or bad success, yet your uneasiness gives me much greater trouble."

The postscript, dated Sept. 11th, after the danger and anxiety of the day, briefly, and without any symptom of exultation, announces the result of this desperate and sanguinary conflict.

" I am so tired that I have but strength enough to tell you that we have had this day a very bloody battle; the first part of the day we beat their foot and afterwards their horse. God Almighty be praised it is now in our power to have what peace we please, and I may be pretty well assured of never being in another battle; but that nor nothing in this world can make me happy if you are not kind."

The note addressed to the treasurer is nearly similar.

" *Sept.* 11. — The english post of the 26th is come, but I have not strength to do any thing but that of letting you know that we have had this day a very murdering battle. God has blessed us with a victory, we having first beat their foot and then their horse. If the dutch please, it is now in our power to have what peace we please, and I have

the happiness of being pretty well assured that this is the last battle I shall be in; so that I may end my days in some quietness, and have the satisfaction of your company."

Marlborough had scarcely retired to enjoy a short repose after his incessant fatigues, before he was disturbed by the numerous appeals made by the officers of the different nations in the army, to give orders for relieving the wounded, and disposing of the sick. But on the ensuing morning his feeling mind was exposed to much more painful emotions; for that day was dedicated to the melancholy solemnity of burying the slain. On riding over the field of battle, he surveyed with a heavy heart the numerous bodies of the dead and dying, strewed over the plain, or heaped upon each other. Nor did he feel only for the sufferings of his companions in arms; the groans of the wounded enemies, and the sight of their mangled limbs, equally awakened his compassion. Learning also that many french officers and soldiers had crept into the neighbouring houses and woods, wounded, and in a miserable condition, for want of assistance, he ordered them every possible relief, and dispatched a messenger with a letter to the french marshals, humanely proposing a conference at Bavai between general Cadogan and any officer whom they should choose to appoint, to arrange the means of conveying away these wretched sufferers. The meeting took place accordingly, between Cadogan and the chevalier de Luxembourg, and the arrangements were amicably settled, two days being allowed for burying the dead and re-

moving the wounded*, the officers pledging their parole not to serve till regularly exchanged, and the soldiers to be considered as prisoners of war, for whom an equal number of the allied troops were to be returned. The number of the wounded, who might shortly have terminated their wretched existence, did not amount to less than 3000 men.

The generous commander was so deeply affected with this painful task, and so much harassed by continual exertions, as to be seriously indisposed. His faithful secretary, Cardonel, fearful lest some exaggerated account of his illness should reach England, communicated it to the duchess as the mere result of over-fatigue, adding, that he had confined himself to his chamber, and was already recovering. The duke himself casually observed in his letters to his wife and Godolphin, that he had not recovered the fatigue of the battle, and the want of sleep for two days and two nights. He likewise complained of a continual head-ache and soreness of limbs, as well as of an inward heat which excoriated his lips, and was accompanied with feverish and nervous debility.

After this temporary illness had subsided, which he attributes principally to anxiety for the loss of so many friends, he observes, in a letter to Godolphin (Oct. 3.), " I was so out of order the last post, that I could not give any answer to your four letters of the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 9th. I am extremely obliged to you for your kind concern for my health and safety: my feverish and aguish distemper has

* Letter from the duke to secretary Boyle, Sept. 16. — State Paper Office.

taken a different course, by which I hope to be cured; at present it dispirits me.

"I should, after the battle, have preferred the siege of Maubeuge, but it was wholly impossible till we were first masters of Mons. The lines, which the marshal de Boufflers is working from Valenciennes to the Sambre, are chiefly for the security of Maubeuge. In one of yours you lament the killed: in so great an action it is impossible to get the advantage, but by exposing men's lives; but the lamentable sight and thoughts of it has given me so much disquietude, that I believe it the chief cause of my illness; for it is melancholy to see so many brave men killed with whom I have lived these eight years, when we thought ourselves sure of a peace."

In the midst of the military movements for the investment of Mons, which seemed to occupy his whole attention, and during the feverish complaint which his incessant fatigues and acute feelings occasioned, we are pleased to recognise his satisfaction at the return of domestic harmony, expressed in affectionate terms and playful anticipations of future enjoyments. "Your last was from Althorpe," he writes to the duchess (Sept. 23.) "I hope we may be together there next summer, for the place and company will both be very agreeable to me; and I fancy there will be so much disorder at Blenheim, that we shall not have much pleasure in being there till the next year, and then I hope we may fix, for the little time I may yet have to live. I propose to make my court to you this winter, by

being very much pleased with the great advance you have made in your building at London."*

In the same letter he also, with great good humour, transmits a message to lord Sunderland, in which he expresses his wishes, that the hopes of the whigs respecting the barrier treaty will be realised. "I am afraid I shall not have time to thank my lord Sunderland for his of the 27th; it being writ at the same time you were there, I do not doubt but he shewed it to you. His reasoning is very good, and I wish it may all happen as he desires. I am sure nobody would venture more than myself for the keeping a good correspondence between England and Holland, for I think without it we are all undone; but to that end we must not pretend to wash a blackamoor white, which I take the business of the barrier to be; but I see that lord Somers, lord Halifax, and all our friends, think it practicable, so that I hope at last lord Townshend will be able to bring it to a happy conclusion."

In a similar strain of cordiality he likewise gratifies † the duchess with the information, that he will write to the queen in conformity with her intreaties; and that he may not be considered as too timid and lukewarm, he says he will previously send the draught for her and the lord treasurer's approbation, and requests to have it returned with such alterations as they shall think fit, desiring it might be shewn to no other person but to lord Sunderland. By his subsequent correspondence we find that the draught having been sent and returned corrected,

* Alluding to Marlborough House, which the duchess was building.
† To the duchess, Sept. 19.

he fulfilled his promise, by transmitting the intended letter to the queen; and we have no doubt, though this letter is missing, that it contained a severe remonstrance on her usage of the duchess, and her partiality to Mrs. Masham.

The account of this victory was received in England with mixed sensations of triumph on the side of his friends, and of blame on that of his enemies. In public, a general joy seemed to prevail; the queen, though secretly indifferent to his successes, could not avoid manifesting exultation at the triumph of her arms, and ordering a day of thanksgiving. Godolphin, in consequence of this auspicious event, obtained a loan from the bank, which he had before solicited in vain; and all the true friends of England, as well as the partisans of the victorious general, lauded his military talents with increasing enthusiasm. But his numerous slanderers, both in the court and the country, cast upon him the most bitter reproaches, censuring the attack as rash and imprudent, and as a wanton sacrifice of so many gallant men to his personal ambition, without any solid advantage. Aggravated accounts of the killed and wounded were eagerly circulated, and the dreadful carnage of the left wing was attributed more to an inordinate lust of conquest in the british commander, than to its real cause. This calumny was as cruel as it was unfounded; for the rash attack of the prince of Orange was contrary to his instructions, and had he adhered to the skilful dispositions issued in the general orders, he would have equally succeeded, and have spared a carnage which swept away the

flower of the dutch infantry, amounting to no less than 8000 * men. Had this chosen body of veterans been reserved, the number of killed and wounded would have been diminished nearly one-half, and detachments of infantry might have been sent in sufficient force to intercept the retreat of the enemy. This false report had a free circulation, because the duke, from delicacy to the prince of Orange, could not attribute the disaster to its real cause.

With as little delay as possible, after this dreadful conflict, Mons was invested. On the 14th, the duke encamped in the vicinity of Belian, and Eugene in his former position, at Quaregnon. The 15th was, to use his own expression, observed very devoutly throughout the whole army as a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God for the victory, and the evening concluded with a triple discharge of artillery and small arms.

After taking the necessary measures for the transport of the artillery from Brussels, as well as for the regular supply of ammunition and stores, the two confederate generals crossed the Trouille; Marlborough, with the covering army, encamped at Havre, and Eugene took up his quarters near Mons, to superintend the operations of the siege. The immediate direction of the attacks was entrusted to the prince of Orange, and a force of 30 battalions and as many squadrons, was appointed for that service. From the distance of the french

* We cannot avoid remarking, that Villars states the number of the dutch killed in these attacks at not less than 20,000 men, probably more than the whole number of dutch infantry in the army.

army, and the scantiness of the garrison, the besiegers did not deem it necessary even to draw a line of circumvallation. The only impediments to the formation of immediate approaches were the continuance of the violent rains, and the delays of the convoys with the heavy artillery. These having at length arrived from Brussels, the trenches, after some preparatory operations, were opened on the 25th of September, and two attacks formed against the gates of Bertiamont and Havre. This operation was interrupted by a sally of the garrison, in which general Cadogan was dangerously wounded, a circumstance of deep concern to the sensitive mind of Marlborough, whose anxiety, as appears in his letters, did not subside until this gallant officer was declared in a state of convalescence.

Meanwhile, reinforcements were drawn from the neighbouring garrisons to supply the losses in the battle, and the siege was vigorously prosecuted, notwithstanding the marshy nature of the ground, deluged by a succession of heavy rains. The approaches were pushed with celerity, and on the 9th of October a lodgment was effected on the covert-way on both attacks, with a loss of no more than 100 men. A heavy fire was continued on the place, and the trenches were carried forward with success until the 16th, when a lodgment was effected on the second counterscarp.

Among those who signally distinguished themselves during these operations, we may record the name of the gallant duke of Argyle, who was foremost in every situation of danger, and exposed his person like the meanest soldier. On one occasion,

he joined an attacking corps at the moment when they were shrinking from the onset; and pushing among them, open breasted, he exclaimed, "You see, brothers, I have no concealed armour, I am equally exposed with you; I require none to go where I shall refuse to venture. Remember, you fight for the liberties of Europe and the glory of your nation, which shall never suffer by my behaviour, and I hope the character of a Briton is as dear to every one of you."* His spirit animated the soldiers, the assault was made, and the work was carried.

On the 17th, at seven in the morning, the gate of Bertiamont was forced, as well as the ravelin, and an adjacent outwork, without the loss of a single man. This successful attack, which facilitated the further operations, was made under the inspection of Marlborough himself, who accelerated the crisis by the impulse of his personal activity. After a tremendous fire from the batteries on the 20th, the breaches were declared practicable.

The danger to which Mons was reduced, roused the french commander to make an attempt for its relief, or at least to interrupt the progress of the besiegers. Berwick, who was hastily recalled from Briançon, where he was stationed at the close of

* This anecdote is taken from a singular book, "The Memoirs of Mrs. Christian Davies," commonly called mother Ross, who served as a common soldier in an english regiment of horse till her sex was discovered by a wound she received. She then continued to follow the camp as a sutler, and was several times rewarded for her exemplary courage and spirit. We should not quote the book as military authority, but as she seems to have been an eye-witness of some of the duke of Argyle's gallant actions, we think her testimony, in this respect, worthy of credit.

the campaign against the duke of Savoy, joined the main army under Boufflers on the 18th, near Quesnoy, and reconnoitred the allied camp; he found them posted with the left toward the Upper Trouille, and the right toward the Haine, their front covered by woods and marshes, and deemed the position too strong for him to risk the consequences of an attack.*

While, however, the french commanders were reconnoitring and performing manœuvres, as if they menaced an immediate attack, Mons was vigorously pushed, breaching batteries opened against the body of the place, and, to escape the effect of an immediate assault, the governor beat a parley, and surrendered with such marks of honour as the confederate generals allowed. Of the 3500 men, who originally composed the garrison, a great number were killed or wounded, and many of the walloons joined the besiegers; only 1500 men took advantage of the capitulation, to be conducted to Namur and Maubeuge.

By the capture of Mons and the other conquests on the Lys and the Dyle, the great towns in Brabant and Flanders, the protection of which had previously occasioned much trouble, were entirely covered. The frontiers of the dutch and the adjacent provinces were also exempted from the burthen of supplying encamping and foraging armies; and the french were at length circumscribed within their own limits, and reduced to the resources which they could draw from their own territories.

* Memoires de Berwick.

On the loss of Mons, the french troops were divided into two bodies. Berwick, with 50 battalions and 100 squadrons, took post to cover Maubeuge; and Boufflers, with the rest of the army, protected Valenciennes and Quesnoy, in order to prevent any new operation of the allies. Their precautions were, however, groundless. The heavy rains, the advanced season of the year, the losses of the campaign, and the sickness which was the consequence of the siege of Mons, prevented the allies from attacking Maubeuge, which Marlborough had much at heart. On the 26th, the confederate generals moved from the camp before Mons, passed the Haine, and encamped at Thieusies, where they celebrated a solemn thanksgiving for the capture of Mons. They separated on the 28th for winter quarters, the english marching to Ghent, the danes to Bruges, the prussians to the Meuse, and the remainder of the army to Brussels, Louvain, and the neighbouring towns of Brabant. Eugene and Marlborough repaired to Brussels, and from thence to the Hague, by different routes.*

During his continuance at the Hague, Marlborough, in concert with Eugene, made the necessary arrangements for the future campaign, and stimulated the dutch to concur in the vigorous prosecution of the war. He likewise joined with the republic in representing to the states of the empire, the necessity of furnishing their respective quotas, since they demanded as the terms of peace, no less than the three bishopries of Metz, Toul, and Ver-

* Correspondence. — Lediard. — Vie de Marlborough. — Complete History of Europe. — Memoires de Berwick. — Brodrick, &c.

dun, with Alsace and Franche Comté. He also obtained from prince Eugene a solemn promise that his imperial master would join in pressing the states and princes of the empire punctually to fulfil their engagements. He arranged likewise the proper means for extinguishing the war in the north, or at least for preventing its extension into the empire, and affecting the interests of the grand alliance. Finally, he concerted with Eugene measures for dispatching such a powerful reinforcement into Spain as would enable the confederates no longer to confine themselves to defensive warfare, but to undertake such operations as were likely to decide the fate of this protracted contest. *

* Lediard, vol. ii. p. 356—562.

CHAPTER 84.

1709.

Military operations on the Rhine. — Failure of the projected invasion of France, on the side of Franche Comté and Dauphiné. — Defeat of count Merci on the Rhine. — Increase of the disputes between the courts of Turin and Vienna. — The duke of Savoy refuses to take the field. — The troops commanded by marshal Daun are checked in their advance by marshal Berwick, and retire to Piémont. — Affairs of Spain. — Spirit and energy of Philip and the castilians. — They protest against the dismemberment of the monarchy, and affect an independence on France. — Trifling operations of the campaign in Catalonia. — Disputes between the french and spanish troops. — Capture of Balaguer by the allies. — Irruption of Noailles, and reduction of Figueras. — Embarrassments of Marlborough from the claims of the king of Spain, and the resistance of the States to the cession of Minorca. — Affairs of Portugal. — The allies defeated on the Caya, and reduced to defensive operations. — Feeble hopes from the co-operation of the portuguese. — Wretched state of the country. — Defeat of Charles the twelfth at Pultava. — Renewal of the confederacy between the northern powers for the partition of Sweden. — The king of Prussia threatens to recall his troops, but is dissuaded by the duke of Marlborough.

The great effort of both powers being made in the Netherlands, the other parts of the theatre of war were of little importance.

A grand project was indeed formed for a simultaneous invasion of France in two quarters where she was least provided with defence. We have already adverted to the plan concerted by the duke of Savoy, for penetrating into Dauphiné and the Lyonnois; and a co-operative invasion was projected in spring on the side of Germany, to enter Franche Comté, where the inhabitants, averse to the bourbon government, were expected to rise in favour of their former masters, the austrian sovereigns. The chiefs of the alliance likewise hoped to embarrass the french government, by fomenting an insurrection in the Cevennes, where the disaffected still maintained a clandestine correspondence with their refugee countrymen.

While the combined troops of the duke of Savoy and of the emperor were in motion towards Dauphiné, the elector of Hanover was to send a detachment from the army of the Upper Rhine, to make a rapid movement upon Alsace; and, before a sufficient body could be collected to oppose them, to push forward to Franche Comté, with the hope of establishing a communication with the army of Piémont in the vicinity of Lyons.

Had this combined attack, which was planned with equal address and boldness, been successful, a fatal blow would have been given to the declining greatness of France. But many delays and obstacles occurred to delay the movements of the respective troops. Before the german army could assemble on the Rhine, a considerable force, under marshal d'Harcourt, had been collected to defend the lines of Lauterburg, and to cover Alsace; and

although he was prevented from undertaking offensive operations by the draughts which were detached to the Netherlands, he was in sufficient strength to impede the advance of the germans under general Thungen, inferior in numbers, and unprovided with the requisites for opening the campaign.

During this suspense, the elector of Hanover made, as usual, numerous difficulties before he assumed the command; the want of money also delayed the necessary preparations, and it was not till the latter end of July that the expedition against Franche Comté marched from the army of the Rhine. Still, however, sanguine hopes of success were entertained; for while the elector amused marshal d'Harcourt with a feigned attack behind the lines of Lauterburg, count Merci led 6000 chosen and gallant troops, by forced and secret marches, into the canton of Basle. Passing under the walls of the town, notwithstanding the neutrality of the swiss, he burst into Alsace, which was destitute of troops, and intrenched himself at Rumersheim, near Neuburg on the Rhine, waiting for the junction of another body, which was advancing to his support. In this situation, being apprised of the approach of a corps, under the command of the count de Bourg, which had been detached from the army of marshal d'Harcourt, he formed the imprudent resolution of quitting his intrenchments to oppose them, deceived by the false intelligence that they were greatly inferior in numbers. In a desperate conflict he was totally defeated, and compelled to retrace his march behind

the Rhine, with the loss of half his army. The elector, during the remainder of the season, continued inactive.

This defeat put an end to the projected invasion of Franche Comté; while the military operations on the side of Piémont were rendered abortive by the increase of the fatal misunderstanding between the courts of Turin and Vienna.

In conformity with the project of invading France, Victor Amadeus made active preparations for opening the campaign, and the austrian forces were assembled by marshal Daun to serve under his command; but he refused to take the field until he had received the investiture of the Vigevenasco, which had been promised to him in the treaty of 1703, by the emperor Leopold. Unfortunately, he claimed the district of the Langhes, and nine villages, as dependencies of the Vigevenasco, which being fiefs of the empire, afforded the court of Vienna a new pretext for withholding the investiture.

In the midst of these disputes, the king of France artfully endeavoured to increase the misunderstanding, by making overtures to the duke of Savoy, through his daughter, the queen of Spain, promising to him the most advantageous terms of accommodation.

England and the States were naturally interested in preventing the schism in the alliance, which the defection of the duke of Savoy was likely to occasion. They therefore used the utmost exertions to induce the court of Vienna to comply with his demands; but the only concession which they

could obtain was, a vague promise of fulfilling the treaty, and a consent that commissaries should be appointed, to repair to Milan for the arrangement of the investiture. But these commissaries, though hourly expected, never arriving, the duke ordered his minister to deliver a memorial on the 24th of June to the queen and the States, declaring his resolution not to assume the command until his claims were satisfied. He at the same time demanded the arrears due to him for the pay and maintenance of the austrian troops in Piémont, which the court of Vienna had not liquidated. To conciliate him, the queen and States guarantied the payment of this debt; but their intercession at the court of Vienna failing of effect, the duke made private and stronger appeals to Marlborough, to use his influence over prince Eugene and the imperial ministers. The powerful intercession of the british general was equally fruitless; and the referees delaying to make the award, Victor Amadeus sullenly remained at Turin, and gave the command of the army to marshal Daun, notwithstanding the urgent intreaties of the Maritime Powers, that he would suppress his resentment for the advantage of the common cause.*

In consequence of these delays, the campaign was not opened till the middle of August, when, from the absence of the duke of Savoy, the movements were impeded by frequent altercations

* Letters from the duke of Savoy, count Briançon, and general Palmes, to the duke of Marlborough and lord Sunderland; also from Mr. Chetwynd, the british agent at Turin, to the same, from January to August.

between the piémontese generals and marshal Daun; and even after he had burst into Savoy, and advanced towards Briançon, he found the enemy, under the duke of Berwick, so strongly posted, that he could not venture to force the passage into Dauphiné. At the same time receiving intelligence of count Merci's defeat, he gained no farther advantage over the enemy, than to drive them beyond the frontiers of Savoy, and to capture the small post of Annecy. After this trifling success, he repassed the Alps, marched into Piémont, and closed the campaign at the latter end of September.

In the midst of these operations, Berwick sent a detachment into the Cevennes, defeated the insurgents without difficulty, captured their chief, and restored tranquillity.

Meanwhile, the duke of Savoy had remained at Turin, in a state of gloomy and anxious discontent. His enterprising spirit, eager for action, and panting for glory, brooded over his disappointment, and the conflicting passions of violent resentment and shame at his absence from the army* working upon his feelings, brought on a feverish complaint, succeeded by a permanent indignation at the court of Vienna, who continued their delays of granting the investiture. This temper of mind augured ill of his future exertions. His gratitude and his attachment to the principles of the grand alliance alone kept him steady to his engagements, and he

* Letters from Mr. Chetwynd to the duke of Marlborough, July 24. and from general Palmes to lord Sunderland.

agreed to make the usual arrangements for the ensuing campaign.

The affairs of Spain assumed a new aspect in this eventful year. Hitherto the spanish grandees had beheld with extreme jealousy the ascendancy of french counsels, and the paramount influence of the french embassador; they now began to be dissatisfied with the conduct of Louis, in accepting such conditions of peace as would either lead to a partition of the monarchy, or force upon them an hostile sovereign, whom they despised and detested. They likewise gave credit to his assurances that France, distressed as she was on all sides, involved in financial embarrassments, and exhausted by famine, could not, at the same time, defend herself and assist Spain. They therefore evinced a patriotic resolution to defend their own country, and to prevent a scandalous and dishonourable partition. They were animated by the rising spirit and energy of their young sovereign, who called upon them to rally round the throne of his ancestors, declaring that he would tinge the soil of his beloved Castile with his own blood, rather than resign his crown at the will even of his grandfather, or at the dictates of insulting foes. He likewise gratified his spanish subjects by agreeing to dismiss his french counsellors, and to consign the administration of affairs into the hands of natives. These spirited resolutions excited general enthusiasm among all ranks of people, and an unanimous determination was avowed to maintain the sovereign on his throne. In a grand assembly of the

castilian and andalusian nobles, it was pronounced to be a degradation to the national dignity to suffer England and Holland to parcel out their monarchy; and if the king of France could no longer furnish the requisite assistance, the whole people were summoned to rise at one and the same impulse, and sacrifice themselves for their sovereign, their country, and their honour. This solemn pledge was not belied. Levies of men, and contributions of money and plate were poured in; the enthusiasm of the nobles was communicated to the clergy, who not only lavished their treasures, but employed their powerful influence against a prince who, they declared, was supported by rebels and heretics; while the people, animated by the exhortations of their chiefs and pastors, flocked to the royal standard.

At the same time, Philip, in his own name and in that of the nation, as an independent sovereign and people, appointed the duke of Alva and count Bergueik his plenipotentiaries at the Hague, though he knew that they could not be admitted. He also publicly protested against the terms proposed in the conferences for the dismemberment of his monarchy.

As a farther proof of his independence, he ordered count Bergueik to address a letter to the duke of Marlborough, intimating the willingness of his royal master to enter into a treaty of peace, and requesting to hold a conference either with him, or any person whom he should be pleased to nominate. The british general received this overture while he was engaged in the siege of Tournay,

but declined the proposal, as inconsistent with his instructions, since the acceptance of it would have been an acknowledgment of Philip as the lawful sovereign of Spain.

These resolutions afforded to Louis an opportunity to declare that his power was inadequate to the compulsory dethronement of his grandson; and to give a colour to his professions of no longer assisting Spain, he withdrew the garrisons and recalled his troops, though he soon afterwards permitted a part of them to remain, on the rupture of the negotiations. At the same time he privately encouraged Philip in the spirited resolution of defending his crown to the last extremity, and promised never to abandon him. *

The spirit, therefore, which had been thus excited in Spain, sufficed to increase the army, though it did not produce any important effects, as the stress of the war lay in other quarters.

In Catalonia, the allied forces, though strengthened by british and austrian troops, were inferior to the enemy; but, fortunately, the hostile operations were impeded by the altercations between the spanish general, count Aguilar, and the french general Bezons, as well as by the mutual hatred that subsisted between the soldiers of the two nations, who seemed more eager to turn their arms against each other, than to unite against the common enemy. As in this inauspicious posture of affairs, they remained wholly on the defensive, the

* For a confirmation of this fact, which sufficiently proves the insincerity of the french monarch, see St. Philippe, t. iii. p. 263—309, and Memoirs of the Kings of Spain of the House of Bourbon, chap. 16, 17.

active Staremberg crossed the Segra, and invested Balaguer, in their very presence; and while the two commanders were hesitating about an attack, the fortress surrendered, with a garrison of three battalions, without resistance.

Irritated with this intelligence, Philip himself quitted Madrid, and assumed the command of the army, in the hope of terminating the disputes of the generals, and restraining the feuds of the soldiery; but his presence had no effect, for he had the mortification to regret the want of forage and subsistence, and to observe the unassailable position of the enemy. He therefore indignantly quitted the army, and transferring the command to the prince of Zerclaes, hurried away from a scene where he had experienced nothing but chagrin and disappointment. The only achievement which did honour to the french arms in the peninsula, was the irruption of Noailles into the northern part of Catalonia. He reduced Figueras, and surprising an austrian camp under the walls of Gerona, killed, dispersed, or captured the troops, made the general prisoner, took the artillery and baggage, and after this brilliant exploit, returned to winter on the frontier of Roussillon.

During this year we find many letters from Charles to the duke of Marlborough, in which he blends repeated offers of the government of the Low Countries, with the strongest remonstrances against the barrier treaty, and with claims equally strong for the restitution of the territories dismembered from Spain since the peace of the Pyrenees. The offers of the government Marlborough was ob-

liged to decline, though he never wholly relinquished the hope of so honourable and splendid an establishment. He was, however, much embarrassed by the complaints and pretensions of Charles, because he partly admitted their justice, and was thereby involved in discussions with the british cabinet. He was still farther perplexed by the counter remonstrances of the States; for while they grasped at a large accession of territory, they were displeased that Minorca should be ceded to England, and that a treaty of commerce with Spain was negotiating by general Stanhope, which they considered as unfavourable to their interests. These unceasing bickerings and discordant sentiments harassed the british general, and exposed him to frequent altercations with the pensionary and his other friends in Holland; but they did not obstruct his grand designs for obtaining the evacuation of Spain rather by conquest than by negotiation.

The recent events in Spain seem to have convinced the duke of Marlborough, that Philip and his castilians would resist to the utmost the transfer of their monarchy to the house of Austria. He therefore represented the necessity of hastening the conclusion of the treaty between England, the emperor, and Holland, for carrying on the war in the peninsula with vigour, in which case, he observes, "I cannot see how it could last six months, considering the troops we have already in Spain, and that the remainder of the french must be * recalled."

* Letter to lord Godolphin, Aug. 26.

This observation he makes upon the supposition, that the allies would accept the preliminaries, with the modification of the 37th article, and that Louis was sincere. "But I am told," he adds, "that in England this is thought a continuation of the war, and a giving time to France to recover, so that whilst there are such people as Mr. Harley in the world, it is dangerous for honest men to give their opinion. But to you and the queen, I shall always, as long as I am in business, give mine very freely, and I confess I cannot but be of opinion, that if the war should be continued for some time longer, we shall at last be obliged to the expense of reducing Spain. For I do not think it in the power of the french king or his ministers to oblige the spaniards and the duke of Anjou to submit to the preliminaries."

In regard to the continuance of hostilities in Spain, he farther observed, that it was necessary to act on a different method from that which had been hitherto pursued. He deemed it a waste of treasure and blood to limit the military operations to the conquest of a few frontier provinces, which he said would be to protract the war longer than he should live; on the contrary, he recommended the most active measures for collecting an efficient force, on both sides of the peninsula, to advance into the heart of Spain, and take possession of Madrid. *

With this view, he laboured to organise powerful armies in Portugal and Catalonia, and having obtained the concurrence of the british, imperial,

* Letter to lord Godolphin.

and dutch cabinets, actually accumulated a force in both quarters, which was to assemble early in the spring, and which he deemed adequate to accomplish the grand object to which he directed his views.

On the side of Portugal, the campaign was opened with sanguine hopes of brilliant success, by the advance of the united forces under lord Galway and the marquis of Frontera, towards the Caya, with a view of penetrating into the western provinces of Spain, and besieging the important fortress of Badajoz. They found the spanish army, under the marquis of Bay, posted on the opposite bank of the Caya. Disputes, as usual, arose between the portuguese and british generals, and a resolution was adopted, contrary to the opinion of Galway, to cross the river, with the hopes of surprising the enemy, part of whom appeared to be in the act of foraging. In this operation, the portuguese horse of the left wing being attacked with great impetuosity by the spanish cavalry, gave way as at the battle of Almanza, and left the flank of the infantry uncovered. After a desperate conflict, in which the united corps of infantry exerted themselves to repair this fatal disaster, they were defeated, but made an orderly retreat. During the engagement, Galway led up two battalions of british veterans, and one of spanish recruits, but being unsustained by the horse, they were intercepted by the enemy, and surrendered prisoners of war. The general himself narrowly escaped the loss of his life or liberty, and after wandering during the whole night, with difficulty rejoined the

army. With discouraged and defeated troops, however, he repulsed the pursuing enemy, and occupying strong positions behind the Guadiana, covered the frontiers of Portugal. This petty defeat, in which the loss, exclusive of prisoners, was very inconsiderable, animated the spirit of the spaniards as much as it depressed that of the portuguese; but no event of consequence occurred during the remainder of the campaign, the allied forces continuing on the defensive, and the spaniards not venturing to undertake active operations.

From the letters of Marlborough it appears, that the repeated defeats of the portuguese led him to place little reliance on the spirit of their troops, if left to their own direction. He therefore disapproved a project of lord Galway, which was supported by the british cabinet, to raise six regiments of dragoons among the natives. "This scheme," he observes to Godolphin (July 1st), "can never be depended upon, nor be of any use, but for the subsisting of a few french officers; nor I believe was it ever heard of before, to be at the expense of raising new troops at the end of a war. Whatever may be pretended, you will find this will cost you a great sum of money, and when they are on foot, you will be told that they cannot subsist upon english pay. If one-half of this money had been employed in hiring of old troops, that might have been of use; and you may depend upon it, that the portuguese have been beaten too often this war to do any thing that may be vigorous."

This observation was perfectly just, as the por-

tuguese never more acted with spirit and energy; and the degraded state of the country is justly described by the unfortunate general, who, with great military spirit and perseverance, suffered more from the faults of others, than from his own.

In a letter to lord Godolphin, dated Sept. 4th, Galway observes, " By the accounts you have heard since my return to Lisbon, you are prepared to expect no good from this court. It is every day worse and worse. The king is pretty well, but enters no more into affairs than if he were in his infancy. Nobody will appear to govern, for certainly no government was ever so abandoned; there is not a penny in the treasury, and less credit; and no care taken to remedy it."

Notwithstanding, however, this unfavourable representation, Marlborough still entertained hopes, that the subsidies and reinforcements, contributed by the Maritime Powers, would stimulate the apathy of the portuguese court, and, at least, induce them to co-operate with the troops, who were collected on the side of Catalonia to march upon Madrid.

This year was remarkable for the defeat of Charles the twelfth, at the battle of Pultava*, a

* The Blenheim papers contain several interesting letters to the duke of Marlborough from count Piper, in which he details the rapid progress of Charles the twelfth through the western provinces of Muscovy, in his march towards the Ukraine. He describes the general consternation of the russians, their abandonment of their homes, the voluntary conflagration of their towns and villages, and considers the conquest of the country, and the dethronement of the czar, as inevitable. These letters are very curious, as they resemble the accounts given in the bulletins of Buonaparte: both invaders mistook the flight of the peasantry, and

defeat which interrupted his splendid career of military glory, tranquillised the alarms of the emperor, and freed the belligerent powers from the dread of his formidable interference. The british general sympathised in the fate of the gallant monarch, from whom he had received the most distinguished marks of kindness and respect, and who, with all his eccentricities and chivalrous temerity, possessed many qualifications of a great and magnanimous mind. We observe, therefore, in the duke's letters, a few touches of his ardent sensibility and concern. "This afternoon," he writes to the duchess (Aug. 26th), "I have received a letter from prince Menzikoff, favourite and general of the czar, of the entire victory over the swedes. If this unfortunate king had been so well advised as to have made peace the beginning of this summer, he might, in a great measure, have influenced the peace between France and the allies, and have made his kingdom happy; whereas now he is entirely in the power of his neighbours."

And again, to lord Godolphin: "An officer from the czar's army is this afternoon come with letters, and the relation of the late victory, to the prince of Orange and myself. He left the czar twelve days after the action. I send to Mr. Se-

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the devastation of their villages, as indications of fear and submission, and both were equally deceived. These acts of patriotism and devotion to their country, were, on the contrary, strong symptoms of a determined spirit of resistance, which animated all ranks and distinctions. The destruction of the invading army was the consequence in both instances; and both generals terminated in that remote region a career of uninterrupted success.

cretary a copy of my letter from the czar's favourite and general, with the relation of the whole, so that I shall not trouble you with repeating, but cannot avoid telling you, that the particular account the officer gives me is so terrible; and having once seen the king of Sweden, I am extremely touched with the misfortune of this young king. His continued successes, and the contempt he has of his enemies, have been his ruin."

The defeat of Charles, and the destruction of his veteran army, revived the hopes of his enemies; and a combination was formed between the northern powers of Germany, with Denmark and Russia, not only to recover the territories which he had wrested from them, but to dismember the swedish dominions. The king of Denmark made instant preparations for invading the western provinces of Sweden; king Augustus departed from Dresden for the recovery of Poland, and the two monarchs renewed their offensive alliance with the czar. At the same time, the king of Prussia joined the alliance, with the prospect of conquering Pomerania. This confederacy alarmed the cabinets of Vienna, England, and Holland, and the treasurer intimated, that instant precautions ought to be taken to prevent the overthrow of the balance of power in the North. Marlborough was, however, apprehensive lest any precipitate measures should be adopted which might offend the northern powers, and recommends, with his usual sagacity, a temperate and moderate course of policy. Alluding to the supposed treaty made by the three kings at Berlin, he observes to Godolphin, "If king Au-

gustus marches for Poland, you cannot doubt of its being concerted between the three kings; so that the queen, in my poor opinion, should be very careful of what steps she makes; for we have in this army upwards of 40,000 men which belong to these princes; and should they withdraw their troops, the houses of Brunswick and Holstein would be obliged to do the same, which are 20,000 more. I need not mention what consequence this would have for the advantage of France; but I am sure you will do all you can for preventing the loss of these troops. The pensioner has desired my opinion on this affair, which I have given him, that our first and principal care should be, to oblige these princes not to recall their troops, and afterwards to concert what measures are best to be taken, but not to be hasty in taking a resolution. But if the news be true, which comes from several parts, of the king of Sweden's being killed, that will make a great change in all the affairs of the North."

At the close of the campaign, the king of Prussia, as usual, expressed to the duke his dissatisfaction at the conduct of the allies, and at the little attention which was paid to his interests during the conferences at the Hague. He also renewed his threats of recalling his troops, and even affected to listen to overtures from France.

This letter was inclosed in one from Grumbkow (Dec. 21.), stating that there was a very serious cabal even among those who professed devotion to the duke, to thwart his views, and perhaps to confirm the king in his resolution of withdrawing his

troops. He earnestly intreats the duke to gratify the king for the present, and to find some pretext for inducing his master to employ him on a mission to the Hague, that he might make those communications in person which he could not confide to writing; and intreats his grace not to betray him as the author of this intelligence, because his ruin would be inevitable.

In another letter of the same date, Grumbkow states that the king of Prussia bitterly complained of the distrustful reserve which the queen had maintained towards him, and that he had been neglected and insulted by the dutch. He likewise observed, that his royal master claimed the principality of Orange, and the cession of Guelder, insisting that the emperor and the queen should bind themselves not to make peace till his demands were complied with.

It is almost needless to observe, that Marlborough, as usual, succeeded in conciliating the wayward monarch. At his request, Grumbkow was sent to the Hague. In his conferences with this confidential agent he learnt, that the king had not discontinued his secret negotiations with France, and that there were strong grounds for apprehension lest his resentment against the States, who positively refused to satisfy his demands, should induce a prince of so choleric and suspicious a temper to secede from the alliance. As a means, therefore, of preventing the loss of so useful an ally, a sketch of a letter, containing new promises and offers, calculated to gratify the king, was drawn up by Grumbkow, and transmitted by Marl-

borough to the treasurer. A transcript of this letter, in her majesty's own hand, was remitted, and Grumbkow was charged with the delivery, accompanied with assurances of a similar tendency. This expedient succeeded in securing the continuance of the king of Prussia's co-operation and assistance.*

* Letters between the duke and Godolphin, from Nov. 1709, to March 28. 1710, passim.

CHAPTER 85.

1709.

Increasing influence and claims of the whigs. — Resolve to place the earl of Orford at the head of the admiralty. — Timidity and lukewarmness of Godolphin. — Objections of the queen, and her appeal to Marlborough. — Importunities of the duchess, in favour of the whigs. — Marlborough supports their demands. — Compliance of the queen extorted for this appointment, and for the nomination of the board. — Fatal effect of the increasing broils between the queen and the duchess. — Cabals of Harley. — Marlborough solicits the office of captain-general, and master of the ordnance for life. — The queen, alarmed and offended, refuses his request.

While Marlborough was conducting his military operations, he was again annoyed with the political feuds in the cabinet. We have already referred to the resolution adopted by the whig leaders to place the earl of Orford at the head of the admiralty. Relying on their services to government, and powerful ascendancy in parliament, they made strong solicitations for his promotion. But the treasurer eluded their application, in consequence of the queen's reluctance to admit another whig into the only department from which that party had been hitherto excluded. They were, however, too conscious of their strength, to regard such difficulties, and again stated to the ministers that

their demands must be either immediately complied with, or the government must forego their farther support.

In the course of the summer, the same struggle took place as on the preceding occasions; the same jealousies against the two ministers revived, and the queen once more strongly appealed to Marlborough against this fresh attempt of the whigs to monopolise the power of the state, expressing her indignation against them for repeatedly insulting her feelings, as well as for attempting to usurp her prerogative.

Godolphin acted with his usual lukewarmness and timidity, and, unfortunately, Marlborough fostered no less dislike to Orford than to Halifax. Accordingly, in his letters to the duchess, he gave vent to the most splenetic effusions against this nobleman; but he was no sooner apprised that the whigs were determined to extort his appointment, than he smothered his aversion, and promoted their demands.

Meanwhile, the duchess had reconciled herself to Sunderland, and with her characteristic ardour, resuming her predilections for the whigs, wearied the duke with importunities to exert his influence over the queen, in order to accomplish the proposed change.

As in the former contest for the promotion of Somers, Marlborough was again accused of lukewarmness by the duchess and Godolphin, and again importuned to enforce the demands of the whigs, in a tone and language which he did not approve. He was still actuated by respect for the

queen, and gratitude for past benefits; and it was not till he found the necessity of compliance that he acceded to their importunities. Apprehensive, however, that his language might be misconstrued, and considered as not sufficiently energetic, he again sent his draughts to be corrected, and finally wrote to the queen in a style which they deliberately approved.

At length the queen could no longer resist the accumulated representations of all her ministers, and reluctantly consented to the appointment of Orford. This difficulty was no sooner overcome, than another arose on the formation of the board; for she objected to the admission of sir George Byng and sir John Jennings, whom the whigs were equally anxious to introduce. This refusal led to new cabals and negotiations. Marlborough again became the mediator between the contending parties, and acted with equal firmness and discretion. He strongly supported the instances of Godolphin and the whigs, though he acknowledged, with regret, that his application would be attended with little effect.

"I should be glad," he writes to the duchess (Nov. 1.) "to hear in your next that the queen had approved of such a commission*, as you would think would make every thing easy; for though I am very fond of retirement, yet I am sensible that it will be a great pleasure to hear that every thing goes well. I am of opinion that my letter will make no alteration in the queen; however, I

* A new commission of the Admiralty.

assure you that I am very well pleased, that I have made her acquainted with my mind. I believe her easiness to lord Sunderland proceeds from her being told that she can't do other than go on with the whigs; but be assured that Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley will, underhand, do every thing that can make the business uneasy, and particularly to you, the lord treasurer, and me; for they know very well, that if we were removed, every thing would be in their power. This is what they labour for, believing it would make them both great and happy; but I am very well persuaded it would be their destruction. I shall leave this place to-morrow, and be at the Hague on Sunday, where I hope to find a letter from you."

All the letters which passed between Marlborough and the queen, on this occasion, are unfortunately missing, except one from the latter, which expresses the acuteness of her feelings, and will serve to shew the embarrassments of the duke.

"*Windsor, Oct.* 18.–29.—The illness in my eyes has hindered me so long from writing to you, that I have now four of your letters to answer, of the 7th and 16th of September, and the 12th of this month, which I shall do in their order.

"The first is upon a matter of very great consequence, which in a little time will be put in another method, of which I don't doubt but you have had an account from other hands; but as yet, I can give you none, not having heard what propositions are to be made to me on that subject;

and I must own to you, I am in a good deal of uneasiness to find in three conversations I have had with lord treasurer, since he came from Newmarket, he has not mentioned the business of the admiralty to me, fearing by that, he intends to offer people he thinks will be disagreeable to me; and, therefore, out of good nature, defers it as long as 'tis possible. Whoever he proposes for this commission, it is a thing of that great consequence to the public, and particularly to myself, that I must consider it very well before I can come to any resolution. By the conclusion of this letter of yours, that I have in short answered, I flattered myself that you would have made me easy in every thing; but I find by yours of the 12th of this month, that your mind is altered, which I am very sorry for. I am very willing to comply with yours of the 16th, concerning the duke of Argyle, thinking his behaviour in this campaign deserves it; but I desire you will not say any thing of it to him, till I have the satisfaction of seeing you, for a reason that is not proper to trust in a letter, but what I am sure you must think reasonable when you know it.

" Your letter of the 10th of this month requires a longer and more particular answer than I have now time to give it, but I shall take the first opportunity to tell you my thoughts, very freely, on what you say.

" I return you my thanks for yours of the 26th, which brought me the good news of the surrender of Mons, for which I congratulate you with all my

heart, nobody, I am sure, doing it more sincerely than your humble servant."*

On the very day in which Marlborough landed in England this political feud was terminated. The whigs were gratified by the appointment of lord Orford at the head of the admiralty, in the place of the earl of Pembroke, who was recompensed with a pension of 3000*l.* a year, and of sir George Byng and sir John Leake, as two of the commissioners. The queen on her part was pleased with the exclusion of sir John Jennings, against whom she fostered a peculiar and personal antipathy.†

This new party contest for the appointment of the admiralty board, served, as before, to inflame the spirit of discord which reigned between the queen and the duchess. Since the departure of the duke, their interviews were less frequent; but their correspondence was continued in the usual strain of perpetual altercation. The duchess did not spare her bitter invectives against the secret influence of Harley, the fondness of the queen for Mrs. Masham, and her reluctance to gratify those to whose zeal she was indebted for the glory of her reign. The replies of the queen were equally sarcastic and reproachful. Many of these were communicated to the duke, and increased his chagrin. His letters to the duchess are filled with expressions of concern for this fatal disagreement; and he strongly advises his wife to abstain from a

* Copy in the hand-writing of the duchess.

† The four other commissioners were Dodington (afterwards lord Melcombe), Paul Methuen, sir Wm. Drake, and Aislabie.

correspondence which he justly considered as not calculated to have any other effect than to increase the misunderstanding.

" *Aug.* 19. * * * * I shall say very little to you concerning the queen's letter, which was by no means obliging; but if you can't regain her affections, that matter will continue as it now is. I would go upon all-four to make it easy between you; but for credit, I am satisfied that I have none; so that I would willingly not expose myself, but meddle as little as possible."

" *Aug.* 22. — Since my last I have had yours by Mr. Carte, who came to the army last night. I see by it, that the queen continues her cold and unkind proceedings towards you. That must be so, as long as Mrs. Masham has the opportunities of being daily with her; I agree with you, that ill-nature and forgetfulness give just reason to those I am most concerned for, not to trouble themselves any further than what may concern the public good. It is impossible for me, by writing, to give you all the reasons that I have for the method I have prescribed to myself, as soon as there shall be peace, and which I hope you will approve of, since it is the only method in which I can enjoy any happiness. Be obliging and kind to all your friends, and avoid entering into cabals; and whatever I have in this world, if that can give you any satisfaction, you shall always be mistress of, and have the disposing of that and me."

" *Aug.* 26. — I received yours of the 5th so very late, that it was impossible for me to make you any answer by that post. I must own to you,

that the queen's letter is very far from having any thing that looks like the least tenderness: it helps to confirm me in the resolution I have taken; and I am very confident, when I have an opportunity of giving you and the queen my reasons, that both of you will agree to the method of my future behaviour. The letter you were advised to write is very reasonable; but since the queen has not the consideration she formerly had for you and me, what good effect can you expect from it? It has always been my observation in disputes, especially in that of kindness and friendship, that all reproaches, though ever so reasonable, do serve to no other end but the making the breach wider. I can't hinder being of opinion, how insignificant soever we may be, that there is a power above which puts a period to our happiness or unhappiness; otherwise, should any body, eight years ago, have told me, after the success I have had, and the twenty-seven years' faithful services of yourself, that we should be obliged, even in the life-time of the queen, to seek happiness in a retired life, I should have thought it impossible."

Unfortunately, the duchess was of too irritable a temper to follow this prudent advice in her demeanour to the queen, and a trifling incident will shew the height to which their mutual resentment was carried. On the death of Mr. Howe, envoy at the court of Hanover, his widow was left with a large family in considerable distress. After a painful visit to her afflicted friend, the duchess, from a laudable impulse of humanity, waited on the queen, and describing her lamentable situation,

requested for her a pension, and apartments in Somerset-house. The queen coldly complied, saying she should refer the business to the lord treasurer.

The duchess then requested her majesty to grant some lodgings recently vacated in the palace of St. James, for the purpose of forming a more commodious entry to her own apartments, claiming a former promise. The queen, who seemed to have reserved these lodgings for the use of Mrs. Masham's sister, was much embarrassed at this unexpected request, and solemnly denied that she had ever made such a promise. An altercation ensued, in which the duchess repeated her assertion, and the queen as positively contradicted it, adding, "I do not remember that I was ever spoken to for them." "But supposing," replied the duchess, "that I am mistaken, surely my request cannot be deemed unreasonable." The queen rejoining, "I have a great many servants of my own, and some of them I must remove," the duchess smiled and said, "your majesty then does not reckon lord Marlborough or me among your servants?" On this the queen was again embarrassed, and murmuring some unintelligible words, the duchess observed, "some of my friends having pressed me to wait oftener upon your majesty, I have been compelled, in vindication of my conduct, to relate the usage which I have received from your majesty; and this reason I have been under the necessity of repeating, and asserting the truth of what I said, before they could be induced to believe it; and I believe it would be thought still

more strange, were I to repeat this conversation, and inform them, that after all lord Marlborough's services, your majesty refused to give him a miserable hole to make a clear entry to his lodgings; I beg, therefore, to know, whether I am at liberty to repeat this to any of my friends." After some hesitation, and much disorder in her looks, the queen replied in the affirmative. The duchess, on retiring, added, "I hope your majesty will reflect upon all that has passed;" and, as no reply was given, she abruptly quitted the apartment. *

Soon after this interview, the duchess again obtruded herself on the queen, and solicited her majesty to inform her what crime she had committed, which had produced so great an alteration in her behaviour. This question drew from her royal mistress a letter, in which she charged her with inveteracy to Mrs. Masham, and with having nothing so much at heart as the ruin of her cousin. After exculpating her from any fault, and imputing their misunderstanding to a discordance in political opinions, she added, "I do not think it a crime in any one not to be of my mind, or blameable, because you cannot see with my eyes, or hear with my ears." She concluded, "it is impossible for you to recover my former kindness, but I shall behave myself to you as the duke of Marlborough's wife, and as my groom of the stole." †

* This narrative is taken from an account in the hand-writing of the duchess, and endorsed by her, "An account of a conversation with the queen, when she refused to give me an inconsiderable lodging to make a clear way to mine."

† Conduct, p. 267.

Stung with these unkind expressions, and this proof of further alienation, the discarded favourite drew up a copious narrative of the commencement and progress of their connection.

She accompanied it with extracts from "The Whole Duty of Man," on the article of friendship, and from the directions in the liturgy, prefixed to the communion service, that none could conscientiously partake of the Lord's Supper, unless they were at peace, and in charity with all mankind. To this was added, a passage from bishop Taylor's works on the same subject. In transmitting this singular paper, she observed, "If your majesty will read this narrative of twenty-six years' faithful services, and write only in a few words, that you had read them, together with the extracts, and were still of the same opinion as you were when you sent me a very harsh letter, which was the occasion of my troubling you with this narrative, I assure you that I will never trouble you more upon any subject, but the business of my office. *

To this long memorial the queen briefly replied, that when she had leisure to read all the papers, she would send an answer to them. But she never sent any other answer, and the duchess, in concluding her relation, observes, "nor had my papers any apparent effect on her majesty, except that after my coming to town, as she was passing by me, in order to receive the communion, she looked with much good-nature, and very graciously smiled upon me. But the smile and pleasant look, I had

* From a letter written to the queen, June 13. 1710.

reason afterwards to think, were given to bishop Taylor and the common prayer-book, and not to me." *

This unfortunate breach was speedily followed by the most fatal consequences; for the indignation of the queen was still further inflamed by the intemperate zeal with which the duchess advocated the cause of the whigs, and which increased her natural antipathy to a party which she equally feared and detested. Actuated by these feelings, Anne turned with additional confidence to her new favourite, in whom she found a congeniality of political principles, and a suppleness of manners, which formed a striking contrast with the overbearing temper of the duchess. In this state of mind, she listened more and more to the suggestions of Harley, whose intrigues began to acquire consistency, and who had obtained increasing influence by his private cabals. He was secure of the tories, who were offended with the treasurer and general for their desertion, which they stigmatised as apostacy; and of the jacobites, who were equally indignant at their abandonment of the Stuart family. He even tampered with the whigs in general, as well as with several members of the administration and household. Among the whigs, he succeeded in gaining lord Rivers, who had hitherto professed an ardent attachment to the principles of the party, as well as an unbounded devotion to the two ministers; and even affected to betray to the treasurer the secret manœuvres of Harley. †

* Conduct, p. 270.

† Letter from lord Godolphin to the duke, June 29. 1709.

This political profligacy did not escape the penetration of Godolphin; and, in communicating his suspicions to the general, he recommended the policy of removing lord Rivers from the theatre of intrigue, by appointing him to the command in Portugal, in the room of lord Galway, who wished to retire. Marlborough, however, would not consent to risk the public welfare for a court intrigue; and lord Rivers remained in England, where he continued to be the successful agent of Harley. His influence increased the discontent of the duke of Somerset, who was already dissatisfied with Marlborough, for refusing to confer a vacant regiment on his son, lord Hertford, notwithstanding the repeated requests of the queen. As a still more effectual means of detaching the duke of Somerset from the whigs, she was induced, at the instigation of Harley, to honour him with the most distinguished marks of attention and regard. She affected to make him her confident in the highest affairs of state, and admitted him to interviews of such unusual length as occasioned the treasurer afterwards to observe, that he was more hours in the day present with her majesty than he was absent.* The natural ostentation of his character, which obtained him the nick-name of the sovereign †, was gratified by these distinctions; and he not only over-rated his own abilities and importance, but flattered himself that he was now on the

* Letter to the duchess, April 21. 1710.

† He is frequently called by that name in the letters of the duchess, Mr. Maynwaring, and lord Sunderland.

point of advancing from the secondary rank, which he had hitherto occupied, into one of the highest offices of state, from which he had been hitherto excluded, by the jealousy of the two ministers, and the opposition of the whigs.

At this period we find that Harley had also begun to tamper with the duke of Shrewsbury, though the latter, with his characteristic caution, was waiting, before he declared himself, the event of the pending political struggle.*

Meanwhile Harley pursued his grand scheme of policy with increasing assiduity, and joined the tories and jacobites in decrying the conduct of the duke of Marlborough, both in war and negotiation. When he thought that peace would be concluded, he censured the preliminaries, as not sufficiently advantageous to England; and when Louis rejected them, he blamed the rupture of the negotiations. He even corresponded with Buys, and the disaffected party in Holland, to encourage their clamours for a speedy peace.

In military affairs he decried the siege of Tournay, as useless and expensive; he censured the battle of Malplaquet, as wanton carnage; and did not even refrain from so cruel an aspersion as to stigmatise it as a selfish expedient of the duke to thin the number of officers, that he might profit by the disposal of their commissions. This slanderous imputation had the effect so maliciously intended, of prejudicing against the general many

* Letter from lord Godolphin to the duke, June 29.

families of all ranks and distinctions, who were lamenting the loss of their relations in this dear-bought victory. Harley also represented Louis as invincible, and rising stronger from defeats; and imputed the prolongation of the war solely to the ambition of the chief. These accusations, re-echoed by the tories, and repeated by Mrs. Masham to the queen, made a deep impression on her mind, and alienated her still more from the successful general, whose victories she was made to believe retarded the blessings of peace. She did not even offer the slightest tribute of congratulation to the duchess for the victory of Malplaquet, or express the smallest concern for the safety of his person.

In his attempts to decry the conduct of Marlborough, Harley exaggerated the popular clamour, that the queen was reduced to bondage by a single family, the members of which monopolised the honours and wealth of the state. Unfortunately, the duke gave colour to this imputation, by an act of indiscretion, which, at any period, would have been ill-timed, but which, in the actual situation of affairs, was, of all things, most calculated to excite the alarms of his royal mistress. Perceiving the loss of her favour, he formed the design of strengthening himself against the attacks of his enemies, and securing a permanent influence in the army, by obtaining a patent, constituting him captain-general for life.

With the hopes of ascertaining that such a grant was neither new nor unconstitutional, he applied to

lord chancellor Cowper; that nobleman, however, would not suffer his obligations to the duke to bias his judgment as a servant of the crown, and candidly declared that this high office had never been conferred otherwise than during pleasure. The duke not being satisfied with a decision given in the freedom of conversation, the chancellor, at his request, searched the public records, and the result of the enquiry was a full conviction that such a grant was new and unprecedented, except for the obsolete office of constable, which since the 13th of Henry the eighth, had been conferred only for a limited time.* Still not discouraged, the duke ordered Mr. Craggs to search for the license granted to general Monk, but had the mortification again to be informed that it was only made during pleasure, and that a commission for life would, in the opinion of the chancellor, be an innovation, and liable to malicious constructions. Even after this second disappointment, he still persevered, and made a direct application to the queen, in the course of the campaign. Her majesty was naturally alarmed at so new and unexpected a demand, from a subject whose power she already dreaded; and having secretly referred to the advice of her private counsellors, positively declined compliance. Piqued at this refusal, the duke was so imprudent as to write a querulous letter, in which he not only reproached her majesty for this instance of disregard to his services, but even complained bitterly of her estrangement from

* Letter from Mr. Craggs, May 20. and from lord chancellor Cowper, June 23.

the duchess, and the transfer of her attachment to Mrs. Masham, and announced his determination to retire at the end of the war.*

This reproachful letter inflamed the indignation of the queen, and gave force to the representations of the opposite party; and the malevolence of his enemies did not fail to exaggerate his indiscretion as a proof that he secretly aspired to power, which must prove dangerous to the crown.

* Draught of a letter to the queen, in the hand-writing of the duchess, without date, but evidently written at this period. In relating this fact, in his "Memoirs on the change in the queen's ministry, in 1710," Swift observes, "When the duke of Argyle was consulted what course should be taken upon the duke of Marlborough's request to be general for life, and whether any danger might be apprehended from the refusal, *I was told*, he suddenly answered, that her majesty need not be in pain, for he would undertake, whenever she commanded, to seize the duke at the head of his troops, and bring him away either dead or alive." If this anecdote be true, the answer must have been intended to augment, as it naturally would do, the alarms of the queen.

CHAPTER 86.

1709 — 1710.

Return of Marlborough to England. — Parliamentary proceedings. — Speech from the throne. — He receives the thanks of both houses. — Grant of supplies. — Public ferment occasioned by the sermon of Dr. Sacheverell. — His impeachment, and preparations for the trial. — Attempts of Harley to divide the ministry and humble Marlborough. — The queen appoints lord Rivers constable of the Tower, and orders the duke to confer a regiment on colonel Hill. — Marlborough refuses to comply with this order, and retires to Windsor Lodge. — Proposes to extort the dismission of Mrs. Masham, as the condition of his continuance in the service. — Supported by Sunderland, but counteracted by Godolphin and the other whig chiefs. — Correspondence and deliberations on the subject. — The queen recedes from her resolution. — Marlborough is persuaded to accept a compromise. — Fatal effects of this indecisive measure.

After a short continuance at the Hague, Marlborough took his departure for England, in consequence of repeated representations from Godolphin, that without his presence all things in parliament and at court would fall into confusion. In taking leave of the States, he expressed a gloomy foreboding of the treatment which awaited him at home. "I am grieved," he said, "that I am

obliged to return to England, where my services to your republic will be turned to my disgrace."*

On the 8th of November, he landed at Aldborough, in Suffolk, and on the 10th arrived in London, amidst the warm congratulations of the people, who were not yet seduced by his enemies to forget his great and glorious services.

On the 15th, parliament assembled, and the queen, in her speech from the throne, alluded to the artifices of the enemy, and their deceitful insinuations of a desire for peace, with a view to create divisions and jealousies among the allies, in which they were entirely disappointed. Her majesty then exulted in the events of the glorious campaign, and the most remarkable victory with which Providence had blessed her arms. She demanded such supplies as were necessary for reducing the exorbitant and oppressive power which had so long threatened the liberties of Europe; and after again adverting to the insincerity of the enemy, concluded, that force alone would compel them to such terms as would be safe and honourable for all the allies.

After the usual expression of thanks, and a resolution to support her majesty in the prosecution of hostilities, the lords, in their address, congratulated her on the continued success of her arms under the duke of Marlborough, whose conduct was worthy of the chief command in so just a war, and whose valour was equal to the bravery of her troops. The address of the commons dwelt with no less

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 385.

energy on the successes of the commander, and the victory of Malplaquet; and in general, promised to grant speedy and effectual supplies. Both houses, as usual, voted thanks to the general for his late victories, and the great and important successes of the last campaign. On his first appearance in parliament, on the 17th of November, the thanks of the peers were conveyed to the duke by the lord chancellor, in a speech more florid than usual: "I am commanded by the lords to give your grace the thanks of this house, for your continued and eminent services to her majesty and the public during the last campaign, of which nothing can be greater said, than what her majesty (who always speaks with the utmost certainty and exactness) has declared from the throne; that it has been, at least, as glorious as any which have preceded it. But this repetition of the thanks of this august assembly has this advantage over the former, that it must be looked upon as added to, and standing on, the foundations already laid in the records of this house, for preserving your memory fresh to all future times; so that your grace has also the satisfaction of seeing this everlasting monument of your glory rise every year much higher. I conclude with wishing that God may continue in a wonderful manner to preserve so invaluable a life, and that you may not only add to that structure, but finish all with the beauties and ornaments of a lasting peace."

Marlborough did not imitate the ornamental language of the chancellor, but replied in concise and modest terms: after expressing his thanks for

the honour which the peers had conferred on him, he ascribed the principal merit to his companions in arms. To a committee of the house of commons who waited upon his grace with a congratulatory address, he replied in terms similar to those of his answer to the lords.

In less than a month, the pledge given by both houses of parliament was amply redeemed by the grant of six millions for the service of the ensuing year, an augmentation of troops, and every requisite for the successful continuance of the glorious contest. All things seemed to announce confidence and unanimity between the queen, the ministry, and the parliament, as well as a successful perseverance in the struggle which was to establish the liberties of England and Europe.

But we now reach the commencement of that portentous period in which the proud fabric of glory and security, reared by the union of Marlborough and the whigs, was overthrown, by the jealousy of the queen, the bickerings of party, and the intrigues of that crafty statesman, who had risen through his patronage.

Biassed by the incessant representations of her private advisers, the queen listened more than ever to the popular clamour, that she was reduced to bondage by a single family; and she was anxious for an opportunity of humbling that grandeur which she had raised, and of gratifying her personal dislike to the duchess of Marlborough.

On the arrival of the duke in England, the whole nation was in a ferment, on account of a factious sermon delivered by Dr. Sacheverell, preacher of

St. Saviour's, Southwark, before the lord mayor and aldermen. In this effusion, the obsolete doctrine of passive obedience was revived; the principles of the Revolution reprobated; the dangers of the church depicted in the strongest colours; the ministers in general loaded with reproach, and lord Godolphin, in particular, pointed out to public indignation by the invidious name of Volpone. It was afterwards printed, either at the request, or with the secret connivance, of the lord mayor, though the court of aldermen deemed it so reprehensible as to withhold the customary vote of thanks to the preacher.

Though possessing no literary merit, this pulpit invective was instantly lauded by the high-church party, as if it had been penned almost by special inspiration; and, on the other hand, was reprobated by the whigs in a no less extravagant strain of reproach. It became the test of party zeal, and the stimulus of party rancour, and, to the astonishment of subsequent times, attracted as high a degree of attention, as the most admired effort of human eloquence.

The sensitive mind of Godolphin was deeply affected by an invective which he ought to have treated with contempt; and repeated consultations were held by the ministers on this subject, as if it had been a matter of the highest interest to the state. As usual, however, in this heterogeneous body, a great diversity of opinion prevailed. Some, among whom was Somers, proposed to refer the prosecution to the ordinary tribunals; and this sentiment was adopted by Marlborough, though he

warmly sympathised with his friend, Godolphin, and observed, that such preachers, if encouraged by impunity, would soon preach them out of the country.* But the great majority in both houses of parliament encouraged the zealous adherents of government to resort to a more formal and rigorous proceeding; and, unfortunately, the proposal of Sunderland prevailed, to bring the obnoxious sermon before the cognizance of the legislature, and institute an impeachment against the preacher.

The partisans of this opinion were eager to hasten the enquiry; because they fondly anticipated a public triumph of their own principles, and a no less public condemnation of those of their opponents. Accordingly, the customary proceedings were instituted in the house of commons. After some opposition from Harley and his partisans, a vote of accusation was carried; the charge of impeachment drawn up and submitted to the peers, and the most zealous whigs appointed to manage the trial.

But although Marlborough had yielded to the torrent, that he might not offend his friend and colleague, or incur the suspicion of the whigs, he appears to have taken little public share in the transaction. He was scarcely present in the house of lords during any of the discussions on the impeachment, and though he attended on the day the trial was ordered, he did not enter into the debates.

The preparations for the trial, and the discussions to which it gave rise, increased the general ferment; and had the whigs been sufficiently cool

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 276.

to consider the re-action of popular sentiment, they must have been conscious that they were recurring to a test which would manifest their own weakness. Harley, however, and his associates formed a juster estimate of the state of the country, and were encouraged to urge the queen to some measure, which, without risking the stability of her government, would indicate her dislike of the administration, and the declining interest of the duke of Marlborough.

At this period the junta had obtained the offices and honours which they had pursued with such unabated zeal and perseverance, in contradiction to the wishes of the queen. But they had no sooner gained these principal objects, than their jealousy of Marlborough and Godolphin increased, and fatal dissensions arose among themselves.

Of these bickerings and divisions, Harley and his associates artfully profited. They armed themselves with the positive orders of the queen, an authority which they expected the commander-in-chief would not venture to withstand, to mortify him on a point which was at once calculated to gratify the favourite, and manifest the decline of his own influence. If he yielded, they hoped to degrade him in the opinion of the army; if he resisted, they were confident of provoking a princess so tenacious of her prerogative, to adopt a more vigorous and decisive resolution.

An opportunity occurred on the death of lord Essex, in the commencement of January, which vacated two military preferments, that of lieutenant of the Tower, and a regiment, both which were

usually bestowed at the recommendation of the commander-in-chief. To mortify Marlborough, the government of the Tower was instantly promised by the queen to earl Rivers, and the appointment took place in a manner extremely offensive to the duke, and by a stratagem unworthy of the royal dignity. In consequence of the secret advice of the queen and Harley, lord Rivers waited upon Marlborough, and requested him to use his interest with her majesty to confer on him the vacant office. The duke, eluding his request with many professions of an inclination to oblige him, observed, that the post was not worthy of his acceptance, and that he should be happy to serve him on a future occasion. After many solicitations from the earl, and evasions on the part of the duke, the former requested permission to solicit this favour himself from the queen, and hoped he might be allowed to say that his grace had no objection to him. To this Marlborough consented, from a conviction that he should be previously consulted. But he was grievously deceived. Repairing without delay to the palace, he solicited the queen to bestow the vacant place on the duke of Northumberland, adding, that by that means her majesty might gratify the duke of Somerset, by presenting to his son, the earl of Hertford, the Oxford regiment, which Northumberland would resign in his favour. The queen instantly replied, " Your grace is come too late, for I have already granted the lieutenancy to earl Rivers, who has assured me that you had no objection to him." He was surprised at this mortification; but though he made strong remon-

strances, the queen persisted in her resolution, and he was forced to submit.*

As a still further indignity, he had scarcely quitted the royal presence, when he received the command of the queen to confer the vacant regiment on colonel Hill, the brother of Mrs. Masham. Being resolved not to brook this second mortification, the general was anxious to ascertain whether he should be supported by the leaders of the whigs. With this view, he employed the agency of the duchess and Mr. Maynwaring to convey his resolution to lord Sunderland, and demand his advice and concurrence; and he received the strongest assurances of support from the whole party. Sunderland, in particular, answered for the co-operation of lord Somers, who offered to accompany the duke to the queen, or attend her majesty alone, for the purpose of remonstrating against the appointment.†

Confident of support, the duke accordingly requested an audience, in which he dwelt with great concern on the hardships which he had recently endured, and, in particular, represented to her majesty the real prejudice which would result to the army by preferring so young an officer as colonel Hill, before others of higher rank, and longer services. He also expatiated, with considerable energy, on the mortification he should receive from bestowing so extraordinary and partial a favour on a brother of Mrs. Masham: "It is, madam," he

* Swift's Memoirs relating to the change in the queen's ministry in 1710.

† Letter from lord Sunderland to the duchess, without date.

added, "to set up a standard of disaffection to rally all the malcontent officers in the army:" he concluded his remonstrance in warm but becoming language, by recalling to her mind a recollection of his great services, and her former kindness, exhorting her to change her resolution, and not to force upon him so ungracious an order. These representations made not the slightest impression: the queen listened with extreme indifference to his objection, and said, dryly and peremptorily, "You will do well to advise with your friends." He quitted her presence in great disorder, and was observed by the attendants in the antichamber, to depart more moved and troubled than was usual.

Finding the queen inflexible, the general, in conformity with the offer made by lord Sunderland, proposed to wait on her majesty with lord Somers, hoping that his own remonstrances, joined with those of the lord president of her council, who was considered as the head of the whigs, would be attended with more weight. Lord Somers appeared to acquiesce, and Saturday afternoon was appointed for an interview, in which, to use his own words, he was to receive the commands of the duke. But as his lordship was prevented from attending by indisposition, Marlborough refused to temporise any longer. In company with the duchess, he quitted London, and retired to Windsor Lodge, without the customary ceremony of taking leave, and on the very day on which a cabinet council was to be held.

From the suddenness of his departure, his absence was a secret until the hour of meeting

arrived. The effect was, however, far different from that produced at the cabinet council in 1708, when he had extorted the dismission of Harley. The customary business was transacted; the queen, who was present, took no notice of his absence, and none of the members ventured to make the bold and decisive appeal which had then produced its due effect. The assembly finished its deliberation, and separated with the usual forms.

Meanwhile, in the first impulse of resentment, Marlborough formed the natural and proper resolution of resigning, unless Mrs. Masham was removed; and drew up a letter, to be transmitted to the queen, in which, after a statement of his grievances, the mortifications which he had received, the abuse which Mrs. Masham and her relatives heaped upon him and the duchess, and her pretensions to interfere in the military promotions, he adds, "I hope your majesty will either dismiss her or myself."

This letter was submitted to the consideration of the treasurer and the whig leaders. It was warmly approved by Sunderland and his zealous adherents; but Godolphin was extremely alarmed at so decisive a measure, and used every exertion in his power to moderate the resentment of his mortified friend, and to oppose the adoption of Sunderland's advice, which he considered as equally intemperate and dangerous.

On the 16th two meetings were held at the house of the duke of Devonshire, to deliberate on the measures to be pursued in this difficult crisis, as well as to take the letter into consideration.

The treasurer attended neither; from the first, lord Somers, who was expected, absented himself, on the plea of being detained by company at home; and at the second lord Sunderland did not appear, alleging the excuse of indisposition. Nothing, therefore, was concluded on either occasion, except a general resolution to support the commander in chief, in his determination of not complying with the appointment of colonel Hill.

Meanwhile Godolphin acted with equal pusillanimity. On transacting business with the queen, he was too timid to risk any allusion to the duke, and her majesty took no notice of his absence, which induced the minister to observe, in a letter to the duchess, "By what I can collect, she is more displeased with me than with any body else." * But he, unfortunately, proved too successful in dividing the whig lords, and preventing the adoption of a measure, which he erroneously considered as ruinous to the country, because it might terminate in the resignation of the general, and the dissolution of the ministry. It was he who prevented the attendance of Somers at the first meeting, by urging him to request an immediate audience of the queen, for the purpose of dissuading her from the resolution which she had adopted.

Being admitted into the closet, lord Somers said, "I have presumed to request this opportunity, in consequence of a conversation with the duke of Marlborough; and as his grace was yesterday ab-

* Letter from lord Godolphin to the duchess, Monday night, at ten (Jan. 16.)

sent from council, I deem it my duty to speak of it to your majesty. I found, madam, the duke of Marlborough under the greatest uneasiness, having heard that your majesty was inclined to hearken to some people, who might give their advice in contradiction to the opinions of those who had so well succeeded, and to hearken to recommendations for advancement in the army, without, as usual, consulting with his grace. This conduct will be attended with fatal effects, and when it is once discovered that applications to others are successful, it will be impossible to prevent factions in the army, and to preserve the discipline and unity which have been hitherto maintained. His grace likewise apprehends there are some persons who endeavour to do him ill offices with your majesty."

"And may I," he continued, "take the liberty to observe, that the duke of Marlborough is not to be considered merely as a private subject, because all the eyes of Europe are fixed upon him, and business is transacted with him, under the notion of one who is honoured with your majesty's entire trust and favour; and as men depend on all which he says, it gives full force and effect to all which he does. The army also unanimously obeys him, because the soldiers look up to him for advancement. Nor can I conceal from your majesty the unspeakable inconveniences which must ensue, should any thing be done, which may induce ill-intentioned persons to conceive, that there is any alteration in this matter, or which might excite

jealousy in him, and diminish his zeal and spirit at so critical a period."

After a short pause the queen replied, "I have a full and lasting sense of his long and great services, and no one dares attempt to do him ill offices with me, because if they did, their malice would recoil on themselves. This I will confirm when I see him, and then I doubt not I shall have the satisfaction of hearing him own, that, after mature reflection, he has changed his opinion, and will not continue to deem my proposal unreasonable."

"I presumed," adds lord Somers, in the letter making this communication to the duke of Marlborough, "to offer several other things; but I found her majesty very reserved, and not willing to enter into any farther explanation, and, therefore, according as the lord treasurer had advised, I took my leave." *

The cold and repulsive behaviour of the queen gave sufficient indications that she would persevere in her resolution; and Marlborough on his side appeared equally determined not to desist from his threat. In fact, the dismission of Mrs. Masham was the only effectual expedient, by which he could secure the continuance of the great, but motley administration. For as long as she remained at court, the confidential agent of Harley with the queen, she would always find means to give effect to his subtle contrivances, and would suggest new means of mortification and annoyance to the mi-

* Lord Somers to the duke of Marlborough, Jan. 16, Monday, six at night.

nistry. In this design Marlborough was supported by Sunderland, and a few zealous partisans. Yet though they coincided with regard to the end, they differed in the means; he wished to make it a matter of private remonstrance, while his son-in-law was desirous to bring it before the cognisance of parliament, which would have been an insult to the queen. Even the duchess, who could never speak of her former dependant, but in terms of disgust and abhorrence, and who was not herself remarkable either for discretion, or respect to the sovereign, seems to have disapproved so unbecoming a measure, and in the Vindication of her Conduct boasts of having assisted in preventing it.

It was evident that a strict alliance between Marlborough and the whigs, and a perfect unanimity in the party itself, were necessary at this particular juncture, and we find lord Godolphin observing to the duchess,

"*Tuesday night, at* 11. * * * There is no question but the interest of the whigs will get the better of every thing here, and will certainly be extended as far as lord Marlborough would have it; but in order to have that rightly guided, 'tis positively necessary you should both come to town as soon as you can, or otherwise the warmth of some heads may commit errors that are never to be recovered. I am sensible this advice may not agree with the notions of some others, who, I believe, wish as well, but are not capable of seeing so clear through this matter as I think I now do, and can soon explain it, when you come to town;

but 'tis not to be done in a letter for many reasons."

These expressions of the treasurer fully prove that the whigs were not unanimous in their opinion; and although Marlborough himself was fully sensible that he could only depend for the successful termination of this unfortunate business on their vigorous co-operation, he still shewed an unwillingness to contract an obligation, and entertained some scruples lest he should seem too eager in requiring their assistance. These sentiments appear from a letter of the duchess to Mr. Maynwaring, dated Thursday morning.

"*Thursday morning.*—Lord Marlborough has written to lord Sunderland, by this bearer, that he will be governed by his friends in all this matter; but his opinion was, that all must be undone, if this poison continues about the queen. I conclude you will see the letter; it was in answer to lord Sunderland's to me, which was very warm from him, and all his friends; and I think his notions are right. If this business can be well ended, which I much doubt, there must always be an entire union, as I have ever wished, between lord Marlborough and the whigs; but he will not say so much as he thinks upon that subject at this time, because I believe he imagines it would have an ill air, and look like making a bargain for help; and I am of that mind too. But if this matter were settled, interest as well as inclination would make them friends as long as they lived."

It being found impossible, amidst all these va-

cillations, to form a consistent plan of conduct by letter, Mr. Craggs was dispatched on Wednesday, to wait on the duke at Windsor. The result of their conversation appears to have accorded with the opinion of the vigorous party, of which Mr. Craggs was the agent; for on Thursday morning he returned to London with a message, stating, that the duke persisted in his opinion, and that the original letter should be forwarded to the queen, which would finally decide the question, leaving no alternative but his resignation, or the dismission of Mrs. Masham.

Soon after the departure of Craggs, Cardonel, the duke's confidential secretary, arrived at Windsor Lodge, having been sent by Godolphin with two letters, one from himself, and one from lord Somers.

The letter from Godolphin strongly depicted the agony of his mind at his unsuccessful attempts to alter the opinion of the queen, and his apprehensions of the ruin in which the country would be involved, should the duke continue unchangeable in his sentiments. "I am," he observes, "in so great a hurry, and my thoughts so much distracted with the confusion I see coming upon every thing, and every body equally, that I have neither had time to write, nor a mind enough composed to write with any sort of coherence; since I do not see any disposition in those most concerned, on either side, to delay coming to extremities, though to the irrecoverable ruin of the public, nor even to do so much as is necessary to put themselves in the right, when those extremities

come. I have done, therefore, with advising, and shall second, as well as I can, the methods you think most proper, be they never so differing from my too little sense; but I have too much experience, as well as too great concern for my friends, to have any quiet thoughts on this matter."

The letter from lord Somers contained an account of the second audience, from which it appears that his remonstrances had made some impression, though the queen as yet concealed it from the treasurer; for, at the conclusion of his representations, to which she listened with peculiar attention, her majesty expressed, in terms of gracious condescension, her respect for the duke, and then added, "I do assure you that I feel for his grace as much kindness as ever; yet I am much surprised at the great offence which is taken at my recommendation, and when lord Marlborough comes to town, I will endeavour to convince him that my friendship for him is as entire as he can desire."

She did not, however, specify any particulars, or make any express declaration of her intentions, but concluded by saying, "I will send for the lord treasurer, and let him know my mind."

After briefly communicating the account of this audience, the lord president strongly recommended Marlborough to return to town, in order to perfect the good inclinations of the queen, to obviate difficulties, and to put an end to the rumours which agitated the public mind on account of his absence. Godolphin warmly seconded this advice, and pressed him to lose no time in returning. The

same opinion was strongly supported by secretary Boyle, and Godolphin had gradually obtained the concurrence of all the other members of the junta, except Sunderland. *

After what had been resolved in the morning, the duke was equally disconcerted and surprised by these letters, particularly by the application for his immediate return. His reply will shew that notwithstanding his firm conviction, that the dismission of Mrs. Masham was necessary for the future safety of the administration, the alarms of his timid friend, and the advice of Somers, began also to make some impression on his mind.

" *Thursday night.*—I have this minute received yours of this day from the Treasury chamber, and am much more concerned for your uneasiness than any thing that can happen to myself. I beg of you to consider, in the temper the queen is in, if the letter † I sent you by Mr. Craggs be not of more use to put myself in the right, than any thing I can say to her, since she and Abigail will give what turn they please to my conversation. I am of your opinion, that her majesty may have taken the resolution of not parting with me, but care must be taken that the world may know the truth; for should I now submit, the next time Mrs. Masham is angry I must be used ill by the queen; but this is a very little part of the mischief we must expect. I do beg of you, that you would, if possi-

* Lord Halifax appears to have been absent from London at this period, as I find no mention of his name in this part of the correspondence.

† See page 117.

ble, early to-morrow morning, speak with lord president, lord steward, lord Orford, lord Sunderland, lord Wharton, and, if possible, lord chancellor, and the duke of Newcastle; and whatever you shall then agree to advise me, I will do. I will keep Mr. Cardonel till two o'clock, in hopes of having an answer to this letter. I write to none of the lords, so that I desire you to make my compliments, and let them see this letter."

The duchess participated in his sentiments, and in writing to Mr. Maynwaring, she sends him an abstract of the two letters, and observes, "After Mr. Craggs went away with very good instructions, as I thought, an express came from the lord treasurer with two letters, one from himself, and the other from the lord president, with an account of what had passed upon lord Marlborough's subject between them and the queen." After giving an abstract of the lord president's letter, she observes, "This is the substance, and the very words; and yet he seems to wish that lord Marlborough would come to town, which, I conclude, he does at the desire of lord Godolphin; for he is very earnest to have lord Marlborough there, which is certainly the most ridiculous thing for him in nature, as matters now stand; for either he should have let the queen and Abigail have done what they pleased, and resolved to make an end of the war, and so take his leave; or else he should gain the point that is so necessary to carry on any government at home; and if he comes to town, and hears the queen repeat Abigail's advice to satisfy him, I think he will make a strange figure. And if she

wanted new arguments to govern the queen, she cannot fail of shewing her, that as soon as the parliament is up, or an ill peace made, that she might remember how near she was being forced by this ministry, and that she cannot be safe till she has got rid of them all."

After this foreboding in the very spirit of political prophecy, she continues, " And now I have taken the liberty to give you my poor opinion, I will give you an account of lord Godolphin's letter, as short as I can. He shews, in the first place, the greatest desire imaginable not to bring this thing to extremity; but says, he will agree to whatever lord Marlborough would have, whether he likes it or not. Then he gives an account of his having spoken again to the queen this morning, and endeavoured to shew the ruinous consequences of the indifference and little notice she took of lord Marlborough's mortification and concern for her unkindness, adding, that she would certainly be sensible of all he had said before to her upon that subject but too soon; to which he writes, that she only made him a bow, but gave not one word of answer; and he said, though she told lord president that she would send for him, and let him know her mind, that he believed it would not be till she had talked to Abigail. This is an exact account of both letters, and I conclude you will wonder with me why these lords, after such a description, should think it reasonable for lord Marlborough to come. I am sure if he does, I shall wish he had never proceeded in this manner, but have gone to council in a cold formal way, never

to the queen alone, and declared to all the world how he was used, and that he served till the war was ended, only because he did not think it reasonable to let a chamber-maid disappoint all he had done.

" I send you here a copy of what lord Marlborough has written to lord Godolphin, by the messenger that brings you this. I desire you will go by eight in the morning to lord Sunderland, and shew him the copy of the letter and this, for I think it is not necessary for me to write another letter to him, I am so tired with this."

In the interview of Mr. Maynwaring with lord Sunderland, at which Craggs and Walpole were present, he found him firmly resolved to persevere in his resolution, and heartily coinciding with the sentiments of the duchess.

Meetings continued to be held on this important affair, with a view, if possible, to reconcile the discordant opinions of Godolphin and the moderate whigs, on one side, and Sunderland and his partisans on the other. In the course of these discussions the most violent altercations prevailed; secretary Boyle observed to Mr. Walpole, who was of Sunderland's party, " take care what you do, or the remedy will be worse than the disease;" and Sunderland warmly expostulated with Godolphin, telling him that none who pretended to be whigs would fail in this dispute, except Mr. Boyle and Mr. Compton; but the treasurer, though chagrined at the invective, spared no pains to enforce the contrary opinion. He alarmed lord Somers, he wheedled Orford and Wharton, and he

ventured to renew his solicitations to the queen, continuing, at the same time, his anxious efforts to soothe the resentment of Marlborough, and reconcile him to his royal mistress.

In the mean time, Marlborough, perplexed by this discordance of opinion, and these endless discussions, adopted a middle course. On Friday night or Saturday morning he wrote a letter to the queen, containing a vehement invective against Mrs. Masham, but without adding, as he had before proposed, the alternative of making her removal the condition of his continuance in office.

In this letter, which is printed in the "Conduct," he declares that his discontent did not arise from the particular case of the regiment, but from numerous mortifications to which he had been before exposed. "This," he observes, "is only one of a great many mortifications that I have met with; and as I may not have many opportunities of writing to you, let me beg of your majesty to reflect what your own people and the rest of the world must think, who have been witnesses of the love, zeal, and duty with which I have served you, when they shall see that after all I have done, it has not been able to protect me against the malice of a bed-chamber-woman."

After other reflections on the insults he had received from Mrs. Masham and Harley, and desiring her leave to retire, he concludes, "And your majesty may be assured, that my zeal for you and my country is so great, that in my retirement I shall daily pray for your prosperity, and that those who shall serve you as faithfully as I have

done, may never feel the hard return I have met with."*

During this interval, Godolphin and the whig lords had continued to importune the queen; and secretary Boyle had the courage to declare, that if the duke of Marlborough retired, her crown was at stake. Even many of those who secretly caballed with Harley, ventured to suggest the danger and impolicy of compelling the general to resign at so critical a juncture. At the same time the agitation of the public mind increasing, and hints being thrown out in the house of commons †, that not only some motion would be brought forward against the favourite, but that an attempt would be made to suspend the supplies, the obstinacy of the queen was shaken. Convinced that she could not save her confidante without abandoning her purpose, she condescended to summon lord Godolphin to her presence late on Friday afternoon. In conformity with her promise to lord Somers, she said to him, "I have duly taken into consideration the representations of the lord president, and I will not insist on the disposal of the regiment to colonel Hill. I desire you to communicate this to the duke of Marlborough, and tell him, that I shall say so to him in person, when I see him, which I hope will be soon."—"I wish, madam," replied Godolphin, "that your majesty had communicated this to the duke of Marlborough at an earlier period, as he would then doubtless have been satisfied; but as I am afraid, that at present it will not have so good an effect, I must request your majesty to

* Conduct, p. 232. † Letter from Maynwaring to the duchess.

write to him yourself." To this request, the queen merely rejoined, " I will tell it him myself when I see him."

Soon after this audience, the letter of Marlborough reaching the queen, the force of his language, and the firmness of his resolution to retire from the command, excited her fears, and strengthened that bias which she was already inclined to take.

On the ensuing day, when Godolphin waited on her majesty, she shewed him the letter, and when he had read it, he ventured to observe, that it was a very good letter; to which she quickly retorted; " Do you think the conclusion of it good?" Godolphin replying, " It shews, madam, that he is very much mortified, and I hope your majesty intends to answer it:" the queen said, " Yes, but should I not stay for an answer to the message which I sent by you?" On his replying, " with humble submission, I think not," the queen concluded the audience by saying, " I will write to the duke, and send the letter to you to-night."

In this communication, she expressed much concern at several parts of his letter; and after assuring him that he had no ground for his suspicions, she desired him to return to town without delay, when she should be able to tell him, that it was in nobody's power to make impressions upon her to his disadvantage.

After opening this letter, as he had been authorised by the duke, Godolphin adds, " I think the first part a little dry, but the latter part makes it impossible for you to resist coming to town, without

giving your enemies the greatest advantage imaginable against you; and he justified this advice by the concurrent opinion of lord Somers and the chancellor, whom, in conformity with his request, he had consulted.

Hitherto, no representations could prevail with Marlborough, either to return or to continue in the command, unless Mrs. Masham was dismissed. This determination appears in his letter to lord Somers.

"*Jan.* 21. 1710. — My lord; I give you a great many thanks for the honour of your letter of the 19th, and I assure you I shall always have a great deference for your opinion. I am confident you have not yet been thoroughly informed of the causes of my just discontent; and though it would be tedious and endless to repeat them all, I beg leave to give you as short an account as I can of what has happened. On Wednesday se'nnight I waited upon the queen, in order to represent the mischief of such recommendations in the army; and before I came away, I expressed all the concern for her change to me, that is natural from a man that had served her faithfully so many years, which made no impression; nor was her majesty pleased to take so much notice of me as to ask my lord treasurer where I was, upon her missing me at council. I have had several letters from him since my retirement here, and I cannot find that her majesty has ever thought me worth naming; so far from it, that when my lord treasurer once endeavoured to shew her the mischiefs that would happen, she made him no answer, but a bow,

which shews plainly, that what was said to your lordship upon my subject, could proceed from nothing but the advice of those that have been the occasion of all these misfortunes, which I heartily wish might end without any other consequence than the mortification of your lordship's most faithful, and most humble servant."*

In the midst of this suspense, another meeting of the principal whigs was held at the duke of Devonshire's, to take into consideration the queen's letter; and after much debate, it was resolved that, in their opinion, the duke ought to be satisfied with this concession on the part of the sovereign. This resolution was communicated to him, and accompanied by a note from secretary Boyle, congratulating him on the happy termination of this unpleasant business: at the same time, the letter of the queen opportunely reached him, and contributed to soothe the violence of his resentment. Yielding to the importunities of his friends, he repaired to town on the Monday, though he still maintained the resolution of requiring the removal of Mrs. Masham. † But the queen, who suspected this intention, and was more anxious to screen her favourite, than to assert her prerogative, endeavoured to make a party against the address, which she still expected would be brought into parliament, should the general resign his employment. She condescended to apply personally to many of the tories, and even to several of the jacobites, who

* Draught in the hand-writing of the duchess.

† As appears from the correspondence between the duchess and Mr. Maynwaring.

had long abstained from coming to court; and she found a support in Godolphin, Somers, and the lord chancellor, who not only continued to reprobate parliamentary interference, as disrespectful and unconstitutional, but did not even approve the resolution of Marlborough to insist on the dismission of Mrs. Masham. This caution on the part of the principals discouraged the inferior agents, who, in the first instance, had shewn a determination in enforcing the demand, and Sunderland was left almost alone. Marlborough, observing this turn of affairs, listened with more attention to the representations of Godolphin and the moderate whigs; and, after a struggle with his own better judgment, and in opposition to the remonstrances of the duchess, consented to be satisfied with the imperfect compromise which had taken place. He therefore complied with their advice, and relinquished the obnoxious condition of his continuance in office.

Marlborough was, accordingly, admitted to an audience on Tuesday morning, and as the queen was delighted with what she justly considered as a victory, and was anxious to soothe his resentment, she received him with a profusion of kindness, which she had scarcely shewn in the days of his highest favour. *

* We have drawn the account of this political feud from a narrative of the duchess, which differs in a few circumstances from her account in the "Conduct;" and we have likewise derived much information from the correspondence which passed between Marlborough, Godolphin, Somers, Sunderland, the duchess, and Maynwaring. In this, the letters of Mr. Maynwaring are particularly curious, because he sent details to the duchess of the passing occurrences every day, and almost

This half measure produced all the injurious consequences which might have been apprehended from a more vigorous proceeding, without any of its advantages. For the queen was in reality as much offended, as if the disgrace of her favourite had been enforced, and became more firmly resolved to free herself from the control of the existing ministry, whose discordance she had learnt to appreciate. The only effect which it produced was, to render her more circumspect; and she employed greater dissimulation to elude the vigilance of the ministry, and to seize an opportunity of striking a decisive blow, when she was no longer awed by the presence of Marlborough. The favourite, on her part, was fully awake to the danger which she had so narrowly escaped, and employed all the advantages of her situation, to inflame the resentment of her royal mistress, and to annihilate that power, which she was fearful would be turned against her, with greater effect. Harley took advantage of these circumstances, and profited by the disposition of the queen and her favourite, to mature and accomplish his designs, and to avail himself of the revolution which was now taking place in public opinion. Another fatal consequence of this unfortunate compromise was, that it increased the coolness between Marlborough and the whigs. He found that he could not depend on their vigorous support, except in cases

every hour. From these letters it evidently appears, that the continuance of Mrs. Masham at court was owing principally to the efforts of Godolphin and Boyle, as well as to the objections which Somers and Cowper made to a parliamentary interference.

where their own interests or party views were concerned; and they, at the same time, seeing his coldness to them, as well as the decline of his favour, and the approaching disgrace of the duchess, began to vacillate, if not lean to a party which appeared likely to be predominant, and which they did not chuse to offend.

It also produced another injurious effect: it created a schism among the whigs themselves, and contributed still more to indispose Sunderland, and his zealous partisans, towards lord Godolphin and the members of the junta; and we shall soon find a melancholy instance of this disunion, when the treasurer and the whigs tamely suffered lord Sunderland to be sacrificed.

The friends of the captain-general, indeed, endeavoured to flatter themselves, and persuade him, that this was a triumph over the arts of his opponent, and the opposition of the queen. He had certainly the satisfaction of giving the vacant regiment to colonel Meredith, whose military services entitled him to the promotion; but the event only contributed still more to prove the ascendancy of the favourite; for her brother was soon afterwards gratified with a pension of 1000*l.* a year, in which she publicly exulted. This termination of the contest, demonstrated the impolicy into which Marlborough had been driven by the instances of his friends; and the event itself proved the first of that series of mortifications, which preceded the fall of the treasurer, the forced resignation of the whigs, the establishment of a tory ministry, and his own disgrace.

CHAPTER 87.

1710.

Artifices of Harley and his partisans to hasten the departure of the duke of Marlborough for the continent. — Address voted for the purpose. — The reply drawn by the minister changed by the queen. — Passage of the duke for Holland. — Trial and sentence of Sacheverell. — Disappointment and defeat of the whigs. — Defection of many of their partisans. — Hostile conduct of the dukes of Shrewsbury, Somerset, and Argyle. — Popular enthusiasm in favour of Sacheverell. — Disastrous effects of this proceeding.

Harley and his partisans having experienced such obstruction from the presence of the duke of Marlborough, sought a pretext to send him abroad, that they might carry their designs more successfully into execution. Unfortunately, such a pretext was furnished by his own friends, who, with a view to impress the queen with a conviction of his consequence, fell into the snare which their adversaries had prepared. The dutch having urged the necessity of his presence in Holland, both as general and plenipotentiary, his adherents proposed an address in parliament, which they were suffered to carry without difficulty.

This address, after representing the necessity of his immediate presence in Holland, for the interest of the common cause, expressed the sense which

parliament entertained of his great and unparalleled services, and applauded her majesty's wisdom, in having honoured the same person with the great characters of general and plenipotentiary, who was so competent to the discharge of two such important trusts. It concluded with requesting her majesty to order the duke of Marlborough's immediate departure.

It being usual for the sovereign to answer an address on the day on which it is presented, the minister had prepared the following reply, echoing the address, and concurring in the high eulogium passed on the victorious general.

" I thank you for your address, and am very well pleased with this declaration of your just sense of the duke of Marlborough's eminent services, which I am so fully convinced of, that I shall always esteem him as God Almighty's chief instrument of my glory, and my people's happiness, and I will give the necessary orders for sending him immediately into Holland."

But when the minister presented the draught, she objected, and proposed to state that she had some time before given orders for his departure, as if she wished to throw on him the imputation of unwillingness to repair to the continent. Godolphin remonstrated against this cruel imputation, and hinted that the change was suggested by some of her secret counsellors. The queen made the most solemn asseverations that it was her own thought, and was, with the utmost difficulty, brought to consent to a reply, which, though sufficiently cold, was something less invidious than

that which she had proposed. In this reply to the address the queen observed, "I am so sensible of the necessity of the duke of Marlborough's presence in Holland, at this critical juncture, that I have already given the necessary directions for his immediate departure; and I am very glad to find by this address, that you concur with me in a just sense of the duke of Marlborough's eminent services."

While this struggle was pending in the cabinet, and before the queen's reply had been given, the duke had already commenced his journey to the place of embarkation. In passing through the streets of the capital, his carriage was surrounded by multitudes, who expressed their regret for his departure; and many even presented petitions, requesting him not to quit the country during the tumult and agitation which had taken place in consequence of the preparations for the trial of Sacheverell. The duke, however, considered his presence abroad as necessary for the public welfare, and did not receive the answer of the queen to the address, till after his arrival at Harwich. He found it an additional indication of his declining favour. *

Marlborough was detained several days at Har-

* The original address is preserved in the hand-writing of the duchess, accompanied with a detail of Godolphin's audience, when he presented it to the queen. The other circumstances are drawn from a letter of Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, in which he says, "I beg leave to send your grace her majesty's answer to the address, which it seems was not given when presented, nor did I hear what it was till the speaker reported it to the house to-day."—"This answer," he adds, "will appear well enough to those who do not know that there was a better prepared."

wich by contrary winds; and after embarking, and being tossed about for three days, within sight of the dutch coast, was driven back. He did not re-embark till the beginning of March, and, after a stormy and difficult passage, reached the Brill on the 18th N. S. Proceeding to the Hague, he was employed, during the remainder of the month, in directing military preparations, and in attending to the negotiations which had been resumed between France and Holland. At the same time, his mind was kept in continual agitation, by the reports which he received from England, relative to the trial of Sacheverell. This celebrated process, which monopolised the hopes and fears of the british public, and may be said to have attracted the notice of Europe, was begun while Marlborough remained at Harwich. Before his departure from London, the whigs had imagined that the majority which they possessed in parliament, would have enabled them to obtain such a decision as would shew the strength of their party, and fully vindicate the principles of the Revolution, against the attacks of their opponents. However originally averse to this mode of proceeding, and however unwilling to make so contemptible an incendiary the pageant of a popular triumph, he could not but be anxious for the result, and had used his influence in obtaining promises of support from several of his friends and adherents in both houses, who were lukewarm in the cause. Being at a distance, and unable to mark the vacillation of conflicting parties, or trace the private interests which operated during the

struggle, he learned the progress of the trial with equal anxiety and concern.

The majority which had inspired Godolphin and the whig leaders with overweening confidence, was neither so steady nor so zealous as they had vainly hoped. Many had been discouraged by the effect of the recent contest respecting the vacant regiment, which portended a fatal schism in the administration; many were biassed by the wishes of the sovereign, which were unequivocally expressed; and many influenced by the dread of popular fury. From the operation of these motives, the discussions, instead of being calm and decisive, became warm and tedious; the whigs were opposed at every step, and the party of Sacheverell appeared daily to gain strength. Amidst this alarming defection, the conduct of the dukes of Shrewsbury, Somerset, and Argyle, was no less injurious to administration than encouraging to the opposite party.

The duke of Shrewsbury seemed at once to throw off his characteristic indecision, and took such an active part as could not fail to influence those who were guided by his movements. The duke of Somerset, though he had long identified himself with the whigs, had, as we have seen, recently conceived a disgust against Marlborough for several reasons. In consequence of this alienation, he had given, in the preceding year, many proofs of his hostility to the two ministers, by attempting to sow divisions among the whigs; and in the recent struggle relative to the regiment, instead of the decisive part which he had acted on the removal of Harley, he had manifested, at least,

lukewarmness, if not opposition. He now came forward more publicly, and not only made zealous court to the queen, but canvassed, in her name, for recruits to the opposite party, and contributed, as much as any individual, to thwart and embarrass the managers of the impeachment. At the same time, the duke of Argyle was equally unmindful of his obligations: the attentions from the queen and the tories sufficed to estrange him; and in this memorable trial, he not only vied with the duke of Somerset in zeal and activity, but indulged himself in the most injurious invectives against his former friend and benefactor. *

A few extracts from the letters of the treasurer will display the great anxiety and exhaustion which he suffered during this troublesome trial, his extreme disappointment at the defection of so many peers, and his regret that he had ever consented to a measure, of which he already experienced the mischievous effects.

"*Sunday, March 5.*—I have received the favour of yours of the 11th and 12th, and shall endeavour to obey all your commands in it as well as I am able to do; but this uneasy trial of Sacheverell does not only take up all my time, but very much impairs my health, and how it will end I am not at all certain. But I certainly wish it had never begun; for it has occasioned a very great ferment, and given opportunity to a great many people to be impertinent, who always had the intention, but wanted the opportunity of shewing

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 264.

it. Upon the whole, the great majority in the house of lords which we had in the beginning of this session encourages people to commit follies, which, however, we cannot convince them of, till it is too late."

"*March* 17. — The duke of Somerset labours hard against us, and makes use of the queen's name to North and South Britain with a good deal of freedom. I doubt he is pretty sure of not being disavowed, and I believe him entirely linked with the opposite party, upon the foot of knowing the queen's inclinations, and flattering them, but is so vain and simple, as not to be sensible he is incapable of being any thing more than what he is, or that that scheme is not supportable for above six months; but parliament being near at an end, the stream of favour will certainly run that way as soon as it is over."

"*March* 20. — Having no foreign letters, nor no wind that allows us to hope for them, I write these two lines only, by my lord Fincastel, to tell you that at last Dr. Sacheverell is found guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors, by a majority of seventeen votes: the numbers were sixty-nine and fifty-two. The duke of Somerset did not vote. Some of his friends said he was sick, but I fancy it was only his profound wisdom that kept him from the house. To-morrow we are to go upon the consideration of the punishment, and if that be made lighter than in itself is reasonable, I doubt some of our seventeen will desert from us. But this is plainly our case, and it is very well the session is so near an end; for otherwise the folly of

some few, and the villainy of a great many, would make things extremely uneasy. Now, for aught I know, things may run on very disagreeably for six months longer. The parliament will rise in ten or eleven days from this time."

The treasurer was correct in his anticipation of the result, as we find by his letter of March 21st.

"Our sentence against Dr. Sacheverell is at last dwindled to a suspending him for three years from preaching, which question we carried but by six; and the second, which was for incapacitating him during that time to take any dignity or preferment in the church, was lost by one: the numbers were 60 to 59. So all this bustle and fatigue ends in no more but a suspension of three years from the pulpit, and burning his sermon at the Old Exchange.

"The conjunction of the duke of Somerset and lord Rivers with the duke of Argyle, and his brother, the earl of Ilay, has been the great occasion of this disappointment."*

Such was the termination of this impolitic trial, and the disappointment it created. The duke of Marlborough justly considered the result as a proof that their favour was known to be rapidly declining with the queen, and that many of those who had been considered as whigs, and had been their firm supporters, were now paying court to the rising party, and preparing for the catastrophe which they foresaw was approaching. He dwells with peculiar feeling on the proofs of ingratitude

* The duke of Argyle and the earl of Ilay pronounced Sacheverell guilty, but voted against the ministry on the subsequent motions, relative to his suspension and disqualification.

towards himself, which this unfortunate transaction brought to light, at the same time that he forebodes the increasing alienation of the queen, the ascendancy of the tories, and the downfall of the existing ministry.

To the Duchess.

" *Hague, March* 24. — Having time, I begin to write, though this letter cannot go till to-morrow. I am obliged to you for the account you give in yours of the 7th. I believe the behaviour of the duke of Somerset, the duke of Argyle, and lord Rivers, are true signs of the queen's being of their mind, which must inevitably bring a great deal of trouble to her. I do, with all my heart, wish I had not recommended the duke of Argyle, but that can't now be helped; nothing is good but taking measures not to be in the power of ungrateful people. We have here so fine weather that I hope you interest yourself in that all the hands possible are employed for the carrying on of the building at Blenheim; for that is what I long to have finished, and that you and I might enjoy some happy years in that place."

" *March* 25. — By yours of the 10th, which I have received this morning, I find you have the last opinion of the duke of Somerset, and I believe, by many things that are put together, that you are in the right. However, I can't think it possible that he will give his vote or opinion for the clearing of Sacheverell; if he does, there is nothing he would not sacrifice to have power: his behaviour in this matter will be a true weathercock of the queen. I cannot have a worse opinion of any body

than I have of the duke of Argyle; but what is past cannot be helped. And as for col. Grant, I wish him the regiment, but I am so weary, and care so little for the management of almost any body but yourself, that I am very indifferent how any thing goes, but what leads me to a quiet life."

"*Hague, April* 4. — I have since my last had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 13th and 17th, and I am very glad to see that every thing in this affair of Sacheverell has gone to your mind. I pray God that every thing might end so as that we might have quietness. But not only what I observe of the duke of Somerset, and lord Rivers, but more, that of the duke of Shrewsbury, convinces me that he knows he makes his court to the queen. As I am resolved never to depart from the interest of the whigs, I shall govern myself accordingly, seeing by every thing, that the insincerity of the queen is such, that it is next to madness, if you or myself should expect any other behaviour than that of ingratitude. This is so disagreeable a subject, that I shall not only now, but at all times forbear speaking of it.

"Out of the list sent of the division in the house of lords, how were these lords influenced to be for Sacheverell; duke of Northumberland, duke of Hamilton, earl of Pembroke, earl of Suffolk, bishop of Chichester, lord Berkeley, earl of Northesk, earl of Wemyss, lord Lexington? I should have thought all these would have been on the other side; and as I know the cautious temper of the duke of Shrewsbury, he would not be brought back to the steps he has done, but that he knew

the inclinations of the queen. But that which amazes me is, that he could think it possible for the tories to be strong enough to ruin the whigs, in conjunction with the lord treasurer and me.

"Having writ thus far, I have received your two letters of the 20th and 21st, by which I see the behaviour of several lords. I think it has made every thing very plain."

The trial, and the discussions it occasioned, made a deep impression on the public mind, and increased the unpopularity of the whigs. The most moderate of those who favoured the Revolution, disapproved so solemn an agitation of the doctrine of legitimate resistance. For although no one, except the staunch adherents to indefeasible right, could deny that in a free government and a mixed monarchy, resistance is lawful when the sovereign evinces a resolution to overthrow the civil and religious liberties of the country; yet they were adverse to the discussion of a doctrine favourable to those republican notions, which had before overturned the throne and the altar. Even the warmest advocates of the Revolution cannot deny that the managers of the impeachment carried their principles to a height, which was calculated to afford encouragement to licentiousness and sedition. The prosecution of a clergyman, for the promulgation of doctrines which then found numerous partisans, gave countenance to the clamour which had been so often raised among the high-church party, that the whigs were pursuing a systematic design to oppress and injure the church. This alarm was caught by some of Marlborough's most

devoted partisans; and we find the insinuation strongly expressed by his chaplain, Dr. Hare, in his letters to the duchess.

A no less injury to the cause of the ministers was derived from the manly, but indiscreet manner, in which the whig managers admitted the legitimacy of the prince of Wales. For it could not be forgotten that the great actors of the Revolution, with true policy, justified this change on the ground of his illegitimacy, in order not to wound public prejudice, or infringe the rule of hereditary right; and all the subsequent acts of parliament had been framed on the same principle. This incautious avowal removed one great restraint, which had hitherto operated on the public mind; and contributed to increase the bias of the queen, who had formerly been prevented from shewing her natural inclination to her own family, by the consideration that the alleged illegitimacy of her brother was founded on fact. Her doubts on this subject had been frequently expressed to the duchess of Marlborough; and, therefore, on the present occasion, disliking equally her german successors, and devoted to hereditary right, she could not fail of feeling additional compunction when the veil was inconsiderately withdrawn. In a letter to the duchess of Marlborough, even Dr. Hare mentions the injurious effect which this avowal produced on the public mind; and asserts, that many thousands were alienated by the impolitic discovery.

Meanwhile a general exultation prevailed on the issue of the trial, which produced a sensible effect

in transferring to the tories the popularity which had hitherto been confined to the whigs. Sacheverell became the public idol, and aggravated the rising antipathy to the ministry in general, as well as to Marlborough in particular. Even in the course of the process, numbers of the people, as well as many of the nobles and gentry, attended him daily to Westminster-hall, striving to kiss his hand, and praying for his deliverance. As the queen went to the trial, her sedan chair was surrounded by persons of all ranks, exclaiming, "God bless your majesty and the church. We hope that your majesty is for Dr. Sacheverell." His popularity increased, and the great majority of the nation espoused his cause. The clergy, in particular, who were chiefly actuated by congenial sentiments, did not fail to represent him as the champion of the church of England, and to aid him by their addresses from the pulpit. He was likewise surrounded at the trial by the chaplains of the queen.

The populace in London, and in the principal towns, took as warm a share in this controversy, as if it had involved their dearest interests. At the height of the enthusiasm, violent tumults agitated the capital; and it was dangerous to appear without the oak-leaf, which was considered as the badge of hereditary right. It was impossible, indeed, to restore order, without the aid of the military.

The effects of such a general commotion, at this critical period, may better be conceived than described. In fact, as the first movements, which had occurred on the commencement of the dis-

cussion, had encouraged the queen to mortify Marlborough in the affair of the regiment, the result far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of her secret advisers, and convinced them that they might now proceed to accomplish that great change, for which she had long panted, as a deliverance from bondage. However mortified at the unfortunate consequences of this impolitic trial, and the decline of his own favour, Marlborough was still more mortified at the increasing coldness between the whigs and the treasurer, as well as at the extreme impatience which they manifested at his dilatory and cautious temper. The truth was, that the treasurer could not overcome the repugnance of the queen to gratify their demands, and, from delicacy to his royal mistress, he was unwilling to declare the real cause, and no less averse to expose his own want of power. Hence the whigs always suspected his sincerity, when he eluded their importunities; and frequently clamoured for the interposition of the duchess, as the only means of animating his tardiness. These conflicting interests often recoiled upon Marlborough himself, and occasioned equal lukewarmness between him and the whigs. A few letters from Sunderland indicate this misunderstanding, and shew the embarrassments in which Marlborough was involved by the impetuosity of his son-in-law.

To the Duchess.

"*Tuesday morning.*—I am this minute informed that the bishop of Bristol is dead. Upon all accounts Dr. Willis would be the properest person. There are two other men that are very good,

whom the lord treasurer says the queen is very well inclined to, Dr. Mandeville and Dr. Bentley. This is a time that makes this of more consequence than ordinary; so that I beg you would mention it to the lord treasurer as soon as you can, that he may not pretend engagements. If I should speak to him, it would do more hurt than good. I am sure you will be so good as to excuse my giving you this trouble, but there was no time to be lost.

"Notwithstanding all the difficulties and disagreeable things that have happened of late, we shall get the better of them all, if we can but entirely cement together lord Marlborough and the whigs, which is so necessary and so plain, that it can't fail. I am sure I will do my part towards it with the greatest sincerity; and I will only say, he may, if he will, nay, indeed, he must be, the head of our party."

"*Wednesday, six o'clock.*—I had your letter just as I was sitting down to dinner. I found by Mr. Boyle's manner of talking this morning about the business of Sacheverell's sermon, that lord Marlborough and lord treasurer had spoke to him; for he talked of it with another sort of warmth than ever I heard him. I am more concerned than I can express at what you mention, that lord Marlborough and lord treasurer should complain of any thing now; and I shan't be easy till I have the honour of seeing you, that I may know what it is; for as I have taken pains that there should be no cause given them of complaint, so I am sure I shall continue to do with all the zeal I am capable

of. I must beg, therefore, that you would let me know at what time to-morrow morning I may wait upon you; and if you could in three words just let me know what it is, I should be very thankful, for there is nobody living does wish more their ease and content than I do. And I promise you that whatever you think may contribute towards it, or that you would have me do towards it that is in my power, I will always do; for I shall never forget what our principle and party owe to you, and what I do in particular myself."

To the Duke of Marlborough.

"*Monday, Feb.* 21.—My lord; I am very glad you and lady Marlborough got so well to Harwich. I wish the wind would change, that you might not stay long in so disagreeable a place. It is very unfortunate for our home affairs that you were obliged to go away so soon; for lord treasurer has a slowness and coldness about him, that is really terrible, and, therefore, all that can be, must be done to keep him up, and to animate him. But I am sure it will be impossible to do it without lady Marlborough, and, therefore, I must beg of you, in the name of all our friends, that you would persuade her to come straight to town, when you are embarked, to keep lord treasurer up to do what is right; for without her I know we shall all sink. I don't mean be out of our places, for that I think will be no mortification to any body of common sense; but, besides the danger to the whole, none of our heads are safe, if we can't get the better of what I am convinced Mrs. Morley designs; and if lord treasurer can but be persuaded to act like a

man, I am sure our union and strength is too great to be hurt. Lord president, lord steward, and lord Orford, have charged me with their compliments and good wishes to you, and do hope and beg you to press this of lady Marlborough's being in town, as that upon which every thing depends. As any thing happens here worth troubling you with, I shall not fail to acquaint you with it. I wish you good success, and am most dutifully yours."

CHAPTER 88.

1710.

Arrival of Marlborough in Holland. — Resumption of the negotiations. — Congress of Gertruydenberg. — Ineffectual expedients to modify the article relative to the evacuation of Spain. — Louis rejects the demands of the allies. — Rupture of the negotiation. — Cautious conduct of Marlborough. — Farther refutation of the charge of prolonging the war. — Extracts from his correspondence. — Plan of the campaign. — Eugene and Marlborough assemble the army in the vicinity of Tournay — Force the french lines, and besiege Douay. — Frustrate the attempts of Villars for its relief. — Surrender of Douay and Fort Scarpe. — Correspondence.

On his arrival in Holland, Marlborough was again involved in the unwelcome task of interfering in the pending discussion, without the slightest control over the negotiation, and was again exposed to the horrid, but groundless imputation, that he quitted England, not with the olive of peace, but with the firebrand of war. Since the former rupture of the conferences, the king of France had never intermitted his secret correspondence with the pacific party in Holland. His repeated professions of sincerity, and renewal of offers, specious though not explicit, made a deep impression on the minds of the dutch; and, at his request, Pet-

cum again repaired to Paris, toward the close of the year, for the purpose of receiving his overtures. We find, among the Blenheim papers, many letters from this meddling envoy to the duke of Marlborough, from which it appears that the designs of Louis were illusory, and his propositions vague and ambiguous.

This journey was, therefore, fruitless; and in the course of the winter, the most active preparations were made for the continuance of the war. Still, however, the french monarch persisted in renewing his overtures; and, in the commencement of the year, sent another project, through Petcum, to the dutch plenipotentiaries, which was likewise rejected as equally vague, and unaccompanied with any additional concession. Notwithstanding this failure, he still persisted in his purpose. After many propositions to the dutch, through Petcum, arrangements were made for the renewal of the congress, on the condition that Louis should accept all the preliminaries, except the 37th article, for which he professed his readiness to offer a satisfactory equivalent. Accordingly, meetings took place at Moerdyke, between Buys and Vanderdussen on the part of the States, and the marshal d'Uxelles and the abbot de Polignac on that of France.

Marlborough reached the Hague the very day on which the plenipotentiaries returned from their conference. Their report was made to him, lord Townshend, Zinzendorf, the grand pensionary, and the deputies of the States, and was solemnly communicated on the following day to all the ministers

of the allies. Little hopes being, however, entertained of a satisfactory conclusion, orders were issued for accelerating the military preparations, and the foreign ministers were enjoined to request their respective sovereigns to send their contingents into the field as early as possible, as the most effectual means of forcing the common enemy to agree to a safe and lasting peace.

Meanwhile the dutch plenipotentiaries repaired to Gertruydenberg, which was the place appointed for the continuance of the conferences.

As on the former occasion, conferences followed conferences, and various attempts were made to modify the 37th article, which effectually promoted the views of Louis, by creating divisions among his antagonists; for in the course of the discussions between the allied ministers on this momentous point, the jarring interests of the different parties were called into action.

Buys and Vanderdussen vehemently censured the severe terms which the allies demanded, and observed, that it was not in human nature to expect that the king of France could accede to them. After some struggle, the dutch were inclined to agree to a partition, and to gratify the king of France with the cession of Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, to the duke of Anjou, in lieu of Spain and the Indies. In the course of the conferences, the french plenipotentiaries availed themselves of this inclination, and contended for some compensation of this kind; and the pensionary did not scruple to assert, that it would be happy if peace could be purchased by the cession of Sicily. Godolphin

and Somers were of the same opinion, and even Marlborough did not hesitate to hint his approbation, provided the evacuation of Spain could be secured. But these concessions were strenuously opposed by the house of Austria and the duke of Savoy.

Zinzendorf presented a strong memorial to the pensionary and Marlborough, declaring that the house of Austria would never suffer the smallest portion of the spanish territories in Italy to be ceded to a bourbon prince, and announced the resolution of his imperial master, rather to perish with arms in his hands, than submit to a partition which would prove his inevitable ruin. He urged that the continuance of the general war was the only certain means of securing the fulfilment of the preliminaries, and earnestly appealed to the experience of the allies, whether the same perfidious monarch who had broken the most solemn treaties, would, at this time, more religiously adhere to promises reluctantly yielded in the hour of necessity. *

King Charles not only made similar remonstrances, but reiterated his demand of Roussillon, and the other provinces which had been wrested from Spain since the peace of the Pyrennees.

The duke of Savoy, who grasped at the possession of Sicily, followed their example, by strenuously contending that the slightest dismemberment of any portion of the spanish monarchy would be a flagrant breach of his treaty with the emperor

* House of Austria, chap. 77. — Lamberti, tome vi. p. 37—49.

Leopold, which had been approved and sanctioned by the allies.

In other views of this question the same discordance prevailed. The emperor, though so strongly averse to the slightest cession, would have accepted the suggestion of France for a separate peace, provided the securities she offered were likely to be faithfully accomplished; and Eugene even declared that the conquest of Spain, when left to its own resources, might be effected in less than two years. In this opinion Godolphin was disposed to concur, and Marlborough did not object to an arrangement which he had himself supported the preceding year; though both justly doubted whether the other allies would fulfil any engagement which they might be induced to form for the purpose. The dutch, on the contrary, strongly objected to a measure which they considered as inefficient and illusory, and protested against any peace, which was not general and conclusive.

In the course of the discussions, the expedients proposed by the french ministers dissipated the illusion which had hitherto prevailed among the advocates for an immediate cessation of arms. Louis, indeed, redoubled his proposals and professions of sincerity, and avowing his utter inability to enforce the evacuation of Spain, offered successively to recall his troops, to withdraw all assistance, to contribute, by subsidies, to the prosecution of the war in Spain, and finally, as a pledge of his good faith, to yield four cautionary towns to the possession of the allies. But as they were well

aware that he was secretly encouraging his grandson to persevere, and as he objected to deliver up such fortresses as the allies required, the most strenuous advocates for a separate peace began to suspect his sincerity.

This suspicion influenced the result of the deliberations. His different offers were successively rejected, and the demands of the allies were renewed on the same basis as in the preceding year; namely, that no modification could be admitted of the 37th article, and that the king must, either by persuasion or force, procure the cession of the whole spanish monarchy within the space of two months. The effect of this determination was the same as on the former occasion. Louis protested against the indignity and inhumanity of such conditions, and again appealed to the feelings and loyalty of his people; while the allies justified their demands on the plea of his former insincerity, and the utter inefficiency of the different expedients which he had successively proposed.

It still, however, appears to have been the opinion of Godolphin and the whig lords, that the distresses of his people would compel the french monarch to submit to these severe conditions; and we find an unequivocal proof of this fact, from a passage in the diary of lord chancellor Cowper.

"During the remaining transactions of the intended peace, which was laid in all its steps before the whole cabinet, lord treasurer, lord president Somers, and all other lords, did ever seem confident of a peace. My own distrust was so remarkable that I was once perfectly chid by the lord treasurer,

(never so much in any other case,) for saying such orders would be proper if the french king signed the preliminary treaty. He resented my making a question of it, and said there could be no doubt, &c. For my part, nothing but seeing so great men believe it, could ever incline me to think France reduced so low as to accept such conditions."*

Unfortunately, the opinion of these sagacious statesmen, though well founded, was not verified; for the distracted state of parties in England, and the prospect of the impending changes in the administration, encouraged Louis to struggle yet longer with his embarrassments, and to wait the event of the political conflict which was rapidly approaching to a crisis.

In this whole transaction, we find Marlborough still more implicitly than before conforming to the dictates of the british cabinet, and cautiously abstaining, by word and deed, from subjecting himself to the slightest responsibility. He even pressed Godolphin to prolong the session of parliament, by short prorogations, that the whole course of the proceeding might be submitted to the approbation of the legislature, from the conviction, as he himself observes, that he should be exposed to equal danger in rejecting or accepting the proffered terms of peace; and he emphatically stiles himself *white paper*, upon which the treasurer and his friends may write their directions. We have likewise the positive assertion of Torcy, who, in the former congress, accused the duke of breaking off the nego-

* Hardwicke Papers.

tiation, that in this year the rupture was owing entirely to the cabals of count Zinzendorf.*

After the proofs which have been adduced on this point, we trust that the pages of history will no longer be disgraced by the malicious imputations of party rancour; and that Marlborough will no longer be held up to public indignation, as the firebrand of war. We can farther assert with confidence, that at this period he was not only not the arbiter of peace, but that he did not even control the operations of the war; for we find proofs in his correspondence, that he was often not consulted, and frequently thwarted on the most important occasions. Nor was he any longer the conductor of foreign negotiations. The consciousness of his own declining power induced him to abstain, as much as possible, from interference in every other branch of service, and to confine himself to the immediate circle of his own command. Two or three instances from his letters to the treasurer will be sufficient to prove, that he was often not even consulted in the negotiations relating to military arrangements, or in warlike operations not directly under his cognisance.

"*March* 18. * * * * I think every body is convinced that the chief design of France is to cause a division among the allies. The imperialists are very desirous of making a peace with France, upon the condition they offer of giving four cautionary towns in this country; and the States General are positive in putting an end to the war at once, by giving the duke of Anjou a *partage*.

* Note to Petcum, August 10. 1710, MS.

I am afraid the french are not ignorant of these two opinions, by which they are the better able to amuse and cheat us. Lord Townshend and I shall be sure to follow the orders we shall receive."

"*Hague, March* 28. * * * * I find by your last letter that you think every thing may be finished, so as that the parliament might put an end to the sessions about the 10th of next month. I desire you will let the queen know I shall use my utmost diligence that she may have it in her power before that time to acquaint the parliament, so that she might have their opinion; but if it should so happen, that neither the french nor these people will speak so plain, as may give her majesty the advantage of laying the whole before parliament, I do then earnestly beg, for the good of the service, that the adjournments may be very short; for you may depend upon it, that the intention of this republic is, to continue the negotiations, in hopes of persuading the allies to consent to what France shall agree for the duke of Anjou, in order to have a general peace. You will see by the inclosed papers, given by count Zinzendorf to the pensioner and myself, the intentions of the court of Vienna. I do not doubt of count Gallas having his orders agreeable to these papers; but you must be careful not to let him know the queen's intentions; for lord Townshend and myself have a very difficult part to act so as not to give offence. The letters from Vienna say, that prince Eugene was not to leave that town till the 23d, so that we do not expect him till the end of next month."

" *May* 16. 1710. * * * I have received the favour of your two letters, and as soon as I can see a probability of renewing the negotiations at the Hague, I shall write to lord Townshend, as you and count Maffei desire. By the last post Mr. Secretary acquaints us, that he had acquainted M. Spurnheim that her majesty was willing to recommend to the parliament, next winter, her part of the hundred thousand crowns, for the renewing the treaty for the troops in Italy. When the proposition was made to me at the Hague, I did immediately tell both Schmettau and Grumbkow, that it was so very unreasonable that they ought not to insist on any thing of that kind but at the court of Vienna; so that the king of Prussia will be angry with me, and pleased with your resolutions in England, which, if the war should last, will occasion you many more troubles of this kind. For as my business every where, during this war, has been to save as much as possible the queen's and public's money, they will be sure to make their applications where they shall find it most easy.

" Lord Raby is also very unjustly angry with me, that he is not treating, as he calls it, at the Hague. But as long as I am sure that I do what is best for the service, I shall be very little wounded at what he and some others think. * * * * *

" I dare not speak against the project of sending troops to the West Indies, the cabinet council thinking it very reasonable; but to you I will own very freely, that I think it can end in nothing but a great expence, and the ruining of those regiments. Besides, nothing that can be done there

will forward the peace; and if we can be so fortunate as to have them here, we may have, by one dash of a pen, much more than any expeditions can give in many years. But what I write is only for yourself; for, as I have not been advised with, I beg my name may not be used."

"*May* 19.—Since my last I have had the favour of yours of the 28th, by which I see the intentions of a West India voyage. If I had known sooner of that project, you should have known my particular thoughts, which I writ by the last post, upon hearing of it *by accident.* Though I do not care to meddle with what is not immediately under my particular care, yet I can't forbear saying by the experience I have had, of expeditions in the last reign, as well as this, that it is next to impossible that this can end in any thing but an expence to make you uneasy, the ruining of the regiments, and the increasing the debt of the ordnance. You know very well that these considerations give real uneasiness to nobody but you and me, nobody caring how the debt increases, or how any thing succeeds, so as that their parties do not suffer. I cannot be of this humour; for as long as I am in business, I must say and do what I think is for the service; so that you will excuse the trouble I give you, for I know finding fault must have that effect. What you say as to the different humours of people, I believe is but too true; but as you have with prudence and patience suffered hitherto, I think you must not be disheartened."

All expectations of an immediate peace being

dissipated, Marlborough prepared to take the field, before the enemy could assemble their troops, with the hopes that success would effect what negotiations could not accomplish.

The plan of the campaign was concerted by the two commanders on a scale the most grand and efficient, that had been formed since the commencement of the war, and if executed with vigour, skill, and concert, must have produced commensurate success.

In the Netherlands it was proposed to commence with the siege of Douay, an important fortress on the Scheld, which was connected by water communications even with Amsterdam, and admirably calculated to form a place of arms, for the invasion of France. Their forces were then to be directed against Arras, the last in the triple line of fortresses, which covered the french frontier on the north, and which would open the way to Paris. Collaterally with this plan, a project was laid for the surprise of Calais, for which purpose a secret correspondence had been established with the mayor. But, on the discovery of the plot, the attempt was deferred, and the grand operations of the campaign were to be aided by a descent on the coast, which was to terminate in a combined attack against Abbeville. The capture of this place would leave the allies masters of the whole tract from Arras to the sea, and enable them to close the campaign by the reduction of Boulogne and Calais.

To aid this mighty effort in the Netherlands, the army on the Rhine was to be reduced to such a scale as was merely sufficient for defence; and

the command was accordingly relinquished to count Groenfeld, a subordinate general, by the elector of Hanover, who would have deemed his dignity compromised, by continuing at the head of an inactive force.

In the south-eastern part of France, the operations were planned on a scale no less grand and effective than in the Netherlands.

From Piémont the confederates were to penetrate into the valley of Barcelonette, on the confines of Dauphiné, to traverse the Durance, and take up their position at Gap, preserving their communication by a cordon of troops, posted at Pontis, Echalette, Orres, and Paillon. On their irruption, the disaffected and persecuted protestants of Dauphiné were to assemble at Dye, where they were to find a magazine of arms, and a body of refugee officers, to organise their ranks.

In concert with this invasion, a descent was to be effected at Cette, on the coast of Languedoc, under the count de Seissan, a french officer of great skill and merit, who had quitted the service of Louis in disgust, and was well acquainted with the country and inhabitants. With the support of these troops, an insurrection was to take place in the neighbouring districts, as far as the Cevennes, so long the focus of disaffection. The insurgents were to form communications with each other along the Drome, through the valley of Crette, and by the Vivarais. Thus the fortresses of Sisteron, Seyne, and Digne, which were in their rear, would fall without resistance; and the communication with Provence would not only be intercepted, but

the discontented population of this mountainous region would be embodied to aid the efforts of the invading army.*

In the midst of these operations, the central provinces of Spain, under the dominion of Philip, were to be assailed by the armies of Portugal and Catalonia, who were to effect a junction in the vicinity of Madrid.

Notwithstanding the hopes which these grand and concerted operations might naturally have inspired, the mind of the great commander appeared to sink under the weight of his cares and embarrassments; and both during his stay at the Hague, as well as in his journey to the army, we find him writing to the duchess in a style of unusual despondency.

"*Hague, April* 14. — I leave this letter to go by to-morrow's post. I am very sorry to tell you, that the behaviour of the french looks as if they had no other desire than that of carrying on the war. I hope God will be pleased to bless this campaign, for I see nothing else that can give us peace, either at home or abroad. I am so discouraged by every thing I see, that I have never, during this war, gone into the field with so heavy a heart as I do at this time. I own to you, that the present humours in England give me a good deal of trouble; for I cannot see how it is possible they should mend, till every thing is yet worse.

"I had by the last post an address from Glou-

* In the Memoirs of Berwick, this plan is detailed from the specific information which the marshal obtained from some of the insurgents, tom. ii. p. 100—103.

cester * sent me. I am impatient to know the manner it will be received; for should it receive any encouragement, I fear it may be of dangerous consequence. My fears now are for my country and not for myself; for I have taken my resolution of suffering with those whom I am now joined withal."

"*Tournay, April* 19. * * * I came to this place yesterday, and to-morrow we shall have good part of the army together, so that by Monday, which is the post-day, I may be able to give you some account of the dispositions of the enemy; for a great deal of the good or bad success of this campaign will very much depend upon what we shall be able to do in four or five days.

"We are already sensible of the difficulties we shall meet with in making the army subsist till the 20th of May; but our hopes are, that the french will meet with more difficulty to make theirs subsist. We are engaged, and we must do our best, and be contented to suffer a little, we being one month sooner in the field than naturally we should be. The troops must suffer, but I hope the common cause will be the better for it. There is no uneasiness but I would bear, when it gives the least prospect of ease hereafter; for the enjoying of quietness and your company is my greatest ambition.

"I should be glad, if you are in London, that you would give Mr. Maynwaring the trouble of speaking to some of the Custom-house, I having

* Alluding to one of the violent addresses in favour of Sacheverell.

sent, by captain Saunders, one picture and some looking-glasses. They are not of any value; but I find, among other marks of declining favour, that I must meet with trouble at the Custom-house. The best way will be to send nothing more from hence; for every thing may be had in England, perhaps a little dearer."*

"*Tournay, the 20th.* — The post being obliged to go this afternoon, I have nothing more to write, but that we have forced the enemy to surrender Mortagne, which they had taken from us the day before we came here. I hope we shall be able to march this night, so as to be at the enemy's lines to-morrow.

"I hope to date my next on the other side of the lines."

The trifling conquest of Mortagne was the prelude to the grand operations of the campaign. Marlborough and Eugene having joined at Tournay, put themselves at the head of the army, which had already assembled to the amount of 60,000 men, and was expected to be shortly augmented to nearly double that number.

The difficulty of attacking Douay was similar to that which had been experienced before the siege of Tournay, the place being protected by one of those powerful combinations of nature and art, which so frequently occur in the Netherlands.

* His dissatisfaction at this period was so great, that we find him bitterly complaining of his irksome situation to Mr. Walpole. "I am extremely obliged to you for the account you give of the queen's present temper, which I believe to be such, that if I considered only myself I would not serve one minute longer." — Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, 4to., vol. ii. p. 12.

On one hand ran the Haine and the Scarpe, in the centre was the canal of Douay, and on the other, the lines of La Bassée, which had been strengthened with additional works since the close of the campaign. These lines were guarded by 40 battalions and 20 squadrons, under marshal Montesquiou. Marlborough was apprehensive that the operation of forcing them would be attended with considerable loss; but as farther delay would enable the enemy to collect a greater strength for their protection, it was determined that the attack should instantly commence. "The orders," he writes to Godolphin, "are given for the army's marching this night, so that I hope my next will give you an account of our being in Artois; for if they can hinder our passing the lines, it will put us under very great difficulties, and very much dishearten our friends at the Hague. On all the french frontiers, they talk of nothing but war, so that we suppose our nex letters from Holland will be, that the french are gone from Gertruydenberg. God send us success."

In conformity with this determination, the army moved to Villemeau on the 20th of April, and active preparations were immediately made to prosecute their designs, by securing the passages over the Upper Dyle, and the canal of Douay, which formed part of the french line of defence. With this view, the duke detached the prince of Wurtemberg, with 15,000 men, by Pont à Tressin to Pont à Vendin, where the lines abutted on the Dyle, and the canal of Douay; and prince Eugene sent count Fels with a considerable corps towards

Pont Auby, on the same canal. The whole army followed by wings in four columns, the right commanded by Marlborough, and the left by Eugene. On the route, the british general received the welcome intelligence that his detachment had secured the passage at Pont à Vendin, without resistance. He therefore pushed forward, and crossed at the head of his columns.

Eugene, finding that the passage of Pont Auby was impracticable, traversed the canal at the bridges of Saut and Courières with equal facility and success. The same evening, the two wings united in the plains of Lens, near Montigny, marshal Montesquiou having precipitately withdrawn, with the greater part of the force under his command, behind the Scarpe, near Vitry.

The troops lay on their arms, and early next morning, notwithstanding their fatigue, Marlborough, with the right, advanced towards the Scarpe, and the enemy retreating precipitately behind the Senzet, took post between Vitry and Gouy, and established his head-quarters at Goeulzin. He instantly dispatched general Cadogan to occupy Pont à Rache, on the canal of Marchiennes, in order to circumscribe the garrison of Douay on the north. Meanwhile, Eugene encamping on the other side of the Scarpe, from Auby to Equerchin, completed the investment on the west. The letters of the duke express his joy and surprise at this great and unexpected success, as he observes, that had the lines been well defended, the occupation of them would have been purchased with the loss of many thousand brave

men. * To the duchess he writes in the same strain: —

"*Lens, April* 21. — In my last I had but just time to tell you that we had passed the lines. I hope this happy beginning will produce such success this campaign, as must put an end to the war. I bless God for putting it into their heads not to defend their lines; for at Pont de Vendin, where I passed, the mareschal d'Artagnan was with twenty thousand men, which, if he had staid, must have made it very doubtful. But God be praised, we are come here without the loss of any men. The excuse the french make is, that we came four days before they expected us. We have had for some time extremely fine weather, which will be a great happiness if it continues."

"*April* 22. — This day we have again obliged the french army to quit the Scarpe, so that to-morrow we shall invest the town of Douay, and then we may give some rest to the poor soldiers, who have had none since last Sunday."

"*April* 24. — You may see by the several dates that I have every day attempted to write, but have been always disturbed. Now that we have invested Douay, for near a fortnight we shall have very little to do, but the trouble of making the army subsist; for till the 8th of May we shall not have our cannon. As we have now succeeded beyond our expectation, we shall, in a little time, see if lord treasurer judges right, as to our having a peace. I wish for one with all my soul, but I fear

* From the account in the Gazettes, and letter of the duke to secretary Boyle, April 23. — State Paper Office.

the french have taken their resolution of making this campaign. God bless you, and may he give me some time to live quietly with you, is my daily prayers."

The lines of circumvallation were begun on the 25th, and were nearly completed on the 28th, when both armies made a movement. For the sake of subsistence, and the security of the convoys, the allied cavalry was posted from Auby, through Rasche, to Bouvigny. The infantry was then so stationed as to encircle the place; the line of Eugene stretching from Pont Auby, through Equerchin, to Brebieres; that of Marlborough from thence, through Corbehem, to Ferin, Dechy, Sain, and Waziere. The investment being thus completed, the infantry entered the lines of circumvallation, and preparations were made for the attacks.

Douay was a fortress of considerable strength in the second line of defence, which covered the frontier of Artois. Though less populous than Lille, it embraced a larger circuit. It is situated on a plain, and traversed by the Scarpe, which, on the side of Tournay, renders the surrounding marshes impracticable in rainy seasons. Within the distance of cannon-shot, and between the river and the canal, is fort Scarpe, an irregular pentagon, surrounded with a wet ditch, and fortified by three half-moons, a covered way, and an outward fosse, with sluices to form an inundation.

The command of Douay was confided to the marquis of Albergotti, an officer of acknowledged bravery and experience, and under his orders were

three other generals: the celebrated Valory headed the engineers, and the chevalier de Jaucourt the artillery. The garrison amounted to nearly 8000 men.

From such a force, directed by consummate skill, and favoured by the natural strength of the place, which was well supplied with provisions and ammunition, an obstinate defence was naturally expected. Fortunately, the allies were left uninterrupted in their preliminary measures, from the inability of the enemy to take the field; and their operations were only delayed by the want of the battering train and ammunition.

The customary arrangements and preparations being made, the trenches were opened on the night of the 5th of May. Two attacks were formed, one against the gate of Equerchin, on the west, and the other against that of Ocre, toward the north, embracing a tongue of land, bordered on each side by inundations. The attacks were directed by the prince of Orange, and the prince of Anhalt Dessau, who had recently joined the army at the head of the prussian troops; the latter having 40 battalions and as many squadrons under his command, and the former 20.

On the 7th, in the morning, the parallels were advanced within 250 paces of the pallisades; but during the ensuing night, the besiegers experienced a severe check, from a sally of 1000 grenadiers and 200 dragoons, under the spanish general, the duke of Montemar. The regiment of Sutton, which covered the workmen, was nearly cut to pieces, and that of Smith also suffered greatly.

But by the arrival of fresh forces, the assailants were repulsed and driven back with considerable loss. On the 9th, the great train of artillery, which had been so long expected, reached the camp. It consisted of 200 pieces of cannon, including 80 twenty-four pounders; and a large supply of ammunition was procured at the same time from Tournay.

The approaches proceeded with redoubled spirit, and on the 11th the besiegers not only reached the outer ditch, but erected a battery of 24 pieces of cannon and 8 mortars at each attack, and on the 21st, carried on their approaches to the covert-way.

The increasing danger of Douay stimulated the french court to great exertions, in order to assemble the army, that the place might not fall without, at least, an effort for its relief; and Villars prepared to assume the command. Before his arrival, he threatened, with his usual spirit of gasconade, to relieve the fortress, even at the risk of a general engagement; and in his correspondence with his court, he expressed the most sanguine hopes of success. On the 20th of May, the french army was assembled in the vicinity of Cambray. * Villars

* It is difficult to ascertain the real number of the french. At the time of his advance, Villars, for the purpose of appalling the allies, swelled its amount to 160,000 men; and in his Memoirs, with a view to diminish the shame of his retreat, says that the confederates were superior by 40,000. Probably the numbers of both armies were nearly equal. According to Lediard, the right wing, under Eugene, consisted of 45 battalions, and 101 squadrons; the left, under Marlborough, of 110 battalions, and 161 squadrons: total, 155 battalions, and 262 squadrons.

was accompanied by the pretender, and marshals Montesquiou and Berwick were appointed to relieve him from the labours of his post, in consequence of his wound, from which he was scarcely recovered. He commenced his movements by pushing a part of his left near Arleux, and seizing the castle of Oisy; at the same time throwing bridges over the Scheld, as if he intended to attack the quarters of the dutch troops, between that river and the Scarpe, in the vicinity of Dechy. Having attempted to divert the attention of the allies by this feint, he marched by Marquion and Vis upon Arras; and after collecting additional reinforcements, threw eight bridges over the Scarpe, between Athies and Avesnes. He passed the river on the 30th, and entered into the plains of Lens at the head of 153 battalions and 262 squadrons, encamping between Éloi and Roquelincourt, near Arras, with the intention of throwing succours into Douay, on the side of Lens.

Meanwhile, the allied generals had not been neglectful of their usual precautions. They had already marked defensive positions on each side of the Scarpe; one crossing the road to Valenciennes, from Arleux towards the Scarpe; the other from Vitry to Montigny, between the Upper Scarpe and the canal of Douay. These posts were defended by lines flanked with redans, and mounted with cannon; while reinforcements were drawn from the neighbouring garrisons.

On the 24th, the confederate army made a movement, encamping between Isez les Equerchins

and Arleux, to be equally distant from both of the intrenched camps. They left only 30 battalions at the siege, and 12 squadrons at Pont à Rache. Twenty bridges were thrown over the Upper Scarpe, and roads were made, of sufficient width for the march of the army in columns, in either direction.

On the 25th, when the advance of the french into the plains of Lens became decisive, the allied army prepared to move to the intrenched camp, already marked out on the left of the Scarpe. On the 28th, Eugene took up a more compact position, from Montigny towards Beaumont; while Marlborough, crossing the Scarpe, placed his left at Vitry, and extended his right towards Equerchin. The dutch traversed the Scarpe on the 29th and 30th, and formed the line of communication between the armies of Eugene and Marlborough. Ten palatine regiments arriving from Juliers, were charged to guard the post of Pont à Vendin. The redans of the position were connected on the 31st, by an intrenched line, extending from Vitry to Montigny; the artillery mounted in batteries 400 paces distant from each other; the infantry placed in a single line along the intrenchment; and the cavalry, by brigades, in two lines, 700 paces behind. The prince of Orange, with 20 battalions from the siege, and 12 others from the intrenchments between Dechy and Frerin, also joined; and the whole army firmly waited, in this position, the attack of the enemy, the head-quarters of Marlborough being at Equerchin, and those of Eugene at Henin Lietard.

On the 1st of June, the french commanders moved, with the hope of forcing this position, and encamped between Fampoux and Noyelles, near Lens, the head-quarters of Villars being at Werval. They advanced, at the head of a strong escort, to Betricourt, within musquet-shot of the allied lines, to reconnoitre; but even Villars found them unassailable. Accordingly, after continuing to manœuvre four days, in presence of his antagonists, he made a movement, his right still resting near Fampoux, on the Scarpe, and his left retrograding about a league towards Vimy, with Arras in his rear. Berwick, perceiving no prospect of a battle, quitted the Low Countries, for his command in Dauphiné.

We give, in regular order, the letters of the british general, which indicate his feelings at this crisis.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*May* 12. — By our last letters from the Hague, we conclude the negotiations of Gertruydenberg to be ended; so that it must be the operations of this campaign that must renew the negotiations, which I hope God will so bless, that if the queen should not be so happy as to have a prospect of peace, before the opening of the next session of parliament, that I shall do my endeavours that she and all her subjects may be convinced that we do our best here in the army, to put a speedy and good period to this bloody war. The marshal Villars is expected in two or three days at Cambray, he being to leave Paris this day. After his arrival, we shall, by his motions, be able to judge of his orders,

which most people think are to venture a battle, rather than lose this town, which, if the war continues, must be of fatal consequences to them; for we shall bring all our stores of war to this place, which we can do, even from Amsterdam, by water. We do not hear only from the Hague, but from Paris also, that they flatter themselves that our divisions in England must turn to their advantage; they also have great expectations of success in Spain. We have marked a camp on the plains of Lens, where we intend to receive them, if the marshal shall continue in his resolution of marching on that side. In a day or two we shall mark another, on the side of Bouchain and Valenciennes, so that whatever side they shall think fit to attempt the relief on, we shall be in readiness. If they will venture, this battle must be given in such plains, as that the success will decide the fate of France; so that till I see it, I can't think they will be so rash as to venture all on the success of two hours; if they do, may the Almighty be on our side, shall be the prayer of yours."

To the Duchess.

"*May* 19. — Since my last, I have had the pleasure of yours of the 10th, O. S., and I take this occasion of thanking you for the method you take of sending me several letters, which have given me a good deal of insight into what is doing in England. The inclosed is what you desired should be sent back; but you have not, in any of yours, mentioned what it is that the duke of Somerset said or did to you, which this letter does no otherwise explain, than by calling it unreasonable

and disagreeable to me. I hear of so many disagreeable things, that make it very reasonable both for myself and you, to take no steps but what may lead to a quiet life. This being the case, am I not to be pitied, that am every day in danger of exposing my life, for the good of those who are seeking my ruin? God's will be done. If I can be so blest as to end this campaign with success, things must very much alter to persuade me to come again at the head of the army.

"You will hear by the letters of this post, that the french marched with the resolution to have attacked us last Friday, but when they came in sight of us, their minds changed, finding us much stronger encamped than they were. They have sent an express to the king of France, with their reasons for not attacking, of which I have sent a copy to lord treasurer."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*May* 19. * * * * If M. Villars makes good his threats of venturing a battle, I should yet hope that before this campaign is ended, we might have a sure prospect of a good peace. If we have not action till the end of this month, I shall esteem it a happiness; for by that time we shall have all our troops, except the palatines, and even 4000 of them will be here in the first week of the next month. As the french continue to draw their troops from Dauphiné and the Rhine, to strengthen their army here, prince Eugene has writ to Vienna, that we might have from the Rhine two imperial regiments of horse, and one of foot. Though they should consent, we must not expect these troops

till the month of July; but by it, you will observe that we do all that is in our power for the strengthening this army; for here it is where the fate of this war will be decided, and, I think, that this campaign must do it, which makes me more cheerfully bear the age of threescore."

"*May* 22. * * * * This minute they bring me word that the french have passed the Scheld, and are marching this way; they must make one motion more if they will attack us. Whatever may be the success, pray assure the queen, that for her sake, as well as my own, I shall do my best; for if we have a battle, this must decide the fate of almost all Christendom. The duke of Berwick came to the army yesterday, so that they have now four marshals, Villars, Berwick, Artagnan, and Arco. Since their passing the river, most of our officers are of opinion they will venture a battle; but the consequences may be so very great, that till I see them engaged, I shall be in doubt; but if we must fight, may the great God of battles give us success. I am for ever yours."

To the Duchess.

"*May* 26. * * * The marshal de Villars is very bountiful in his threats, he having a numerous army; but we have had so much time to take our precautions, that I am very confident we shall oblige him to be a spectator of the loss of this town, though we apprehend it may hold out till the 10th of next month. You will have heard of the cardinal de Bouillon's coming to the enemy's camp. He did, two days ago, with a letter to the king of France, in which he sent him back the

order of the St. Esprit, and his quitting the office of lord almoner of France. The letter is writ with such strong expressions as I should think will make the king of France very angry. This cardinal may be of use to the emperor and the king of Spain at Rome, where he intends to go; otherwise, I see no other advantage this can be to the common cause. The neighbourhood of the french may make some write so as may alarm you. But pray believe me, that our situation at this time is so advantageous, we shall have no action before the taking of this place, unless they act contrary to reason, which were to be wished; for in all probability we should have the advantage, which would put a happy end to the war. I am ever yours."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*May* 26. * * * * Marshal Villars's army increases every day; those that are not yet come have ground marked for them in the line, which is above eight miles long. He gives out that his army will be 160,000 strong. It is certain they have a great number of battalions; but I believe, by the sickness they have at this time in their foot, we have as many men as they. We have taken such precaution for the making the ground advantageous to us, that it were to be wished he would make good his threats of attacking us; for, with the blessing of God, we might then hope for such success as might put a happy and glorious end to the war.

"The pensioner writes to me, that he knows for certain, that the king of France has not only given full powers to the marshal de Villars to fight, but

has also encouraged him to venture any thing for the saving of this town, they being resolved to make an end to the war this summer; so that if those at Gertruydenberg can't agree, we shall have a very active campaign.

"I am this day threescore, but I thank God I find myself in so good health, that I hope to end this campaign, without being sensible of the inconveniences of old age."

To the Duchess.

"*May* 29. * * * * The continual motions of the french army have given me very little rest for these last two nights, so that as soon as I have dispatched the post I shall go to bed, in hopes of getting five or six hours' sleep; for as the marshal de Villars is now camped, I shall be obliged, for some time, to be on horseback at break of day. The imperial recruits are come this day, so that now we only want the palatines, and one regiment of prussian horse. Though I have no opinion of your West India project, and that more troops here would be of use; yet as the factions in England now are, I do beg there may be no thoughts of sending them hither; for I had much rather venture my life with too few troops, than to have villains insinuate that any other service is neglected in order to strengthen this army. I am so sleepy that I can write no more."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*June* 2. * * * * You will know by my letter to Mr. Secretary that the marshal had made his disposition, and marched on Friday last with a resolution to attack us; but when he had viewed,

and seen the strength of our camp, by the advice of his generals he camped where he now is.

" The inclosed is what was sent to the king of France two days ago. If the court should insist on attacking, his army is so near that he may be with us in two hours' time; however, we think ourselves so securely posted that we have sent the troops back for the carrying on of the siege. You will see by the sense of the councils of war, that if there be no peace we must have a battle. Our project was, to have attacked Arras as soon as the siege should have been over; but the french having drawn many more troops together than we could have imagined, which gives them, certainly, a great superiority as to their numbers, which will make another siege impossible till we have obliged them to send some of their troops into their garrisons, or decided the fate of Europe by a battle. I thank God I have my health, but what I hear from your side of the water gives me so much uneasiness, that I am not so fully pleased with those sanguine thoughts as formerly, that God would protect and bless us; but with all my soul I pray he may, and shall very freely venture my life that we may have success, which is necessary not only for the preventing of the ruin of England, but of all Europe; for should the french get the better, you may depend on it that Holland is so alarmed by our divisions in England, that they would consent to whatever peace France should insist upon. I desire the inclosed account may not be made public, it being given me by the same person which gave me the first account of the intended invasion for Scotland, as also the siege of Brussels."

"*June* 12. — We have since our last letters received three posts from England, those of the 16th, 19th, and 23d, by which I saw you had only received ours of the 29th. By our next you will have seen that the marshal de Villars had not been able to keep his word to the king of France, in giving a battle. If their resolution holds of venturing one, this country being all plains, it must be very decisive. I long for an end of the war, so God's will be done: whatever the event may be, I shall have nothing to reproach myself, having, with all my heart, done my duty, and being hitherto blessed with more success than was ever known before. My wishes and duty are the same; but I can't say that I have the same sanguine prophetic spirit I did use to have; for in all the former actions I did never doubt of success, we having had constantly the great blessing of being of one mind. I cannot say it is so now; for I fear some are run so far into villainous faction, that it would give them more content to see us beaten; but if I live I will be so watchful that it shall not be in their power to do much hurt. The discourse of the duke of Argyle is, that when I please there will then be a peace: I suppose his friends speak the same language in England, so that I must every summer venture my life in a battle, and be found fault with in the winter for not bringing home peace, though I wish for it with all my heart and soul. If we have a battle, and success, that must put a happy end to this too bloody war; after which I shall contemn faction, and not be uneasy at the ambition of any body, but have a

perfect satisfaction in that of having done my duty to my queen and country."

"*June* 16. * * * I observe some of your last letters mention the advices continue from Scotland, of the jacobites expecting a landing. I can assure you that nothing looks like it at Dunkirk, nor do I believe, at this time, France has any other design but that of strengthening their army here, in order, by that, to oblige Holland to think it their interest to accept of a peace, rather than venture a battle that might be decisive. My last quarters infected a great many of my servants, by which I have lost Groffy, my steward, and poor Turliar *; but the rest are recovering. It is impossible, without seeing it, to be sensible of the misery of this country; at least one-half of the people of the villages, since the beginning of last winter, are dead, and the rest look as if they came out of their graves. It is so mortifying, that no christian can see it, but must, with all his heart, wish for a speedy peace."

After the unsuccessful attempt of the french, the siege was prosecuted with vigour, and on the 16th, signals of distress from the town announced to Villars the extreme necessity to which it was reduced. He therefore made a demonstration of relieving it on the left side of the Scarpe by re-crossing over his former bridges, and taking post between Arras and the castle of Oisy, near Arleux. To counteract this movement, Marlborough repassed the Scarpe at Vitry, and took up his position

* The duke's favourite dog.

at Gouelzin. Eugene continued to press the siege, and at the same time adopted measures to co-operate with his colleague, in case the enemy should venture to make a serious attack.

On the 22d of June the trenches were opened before fort Scarpe, and carried on by sap; and on the 26th, terms of capitulation were settled, both for that place and the town. The garrison was allowed to march out with all the honours of war, on the condition of being exchanged, with other favourable advantages. The confederate generals applauded their spirited defence, and paid a due tribute of respect to the gallantry of Albergotti, who had retarded the surrender, until his garrison was reduced to 4500 effective men, and preparations were made for a general assault. *

He announces the surrender, in a letter to the duchess, more expressive of chagrin at the wretched state of affairs in England, than of exultation at the success of his arms.

"*June* 27.—I writ to you yesterday by the post, and have nothing new. However, I won't let colonel Panton go without a letter to you. I send him with the good news of Douay and the fort of Scarpe's being surrendered; the giving up of the latter will save us a good deal of time, and a great many men's lives. But I am so mortified at the

* The account of these military operations is taken from the letters of Marlborough, the official dispatches in the Gazettes, and from a collation of various writers; viz., Brodrick, Milner, Kane, Conduct of the duke of Marlborough, Lediard, the french biographer, Memoires de Villars, Vie du Prince Eugene, Dumont's Military History, Complete History of Europe, in which, with the exception of a few trifling errors, the best narrative is given on the subject.

extravagant behaviour in England, that I can take no pleasure. It is very plain the king of France is so heartened by the expectations of disorders in England, that he will not sincerely think of peace, so that, at this time, I am full of spleen; for I am afraid I must drudge on for four or five months longer, and venture my life for those who do not deserve it from me."

We close this account with another letter to the duchess, which indicates great humanity.

"*June* 30.—I was in such a hurry when I sent away colonel Panton, that I had hardly time to write to you. I am obliged to you for the apprehensions you are in for my health. I must own to you, that my apprehensions of sickness are greater than what I have for the french army. I thank God it is not yet got amongst our soldiers, but all the churches and the villages are full of the poor country people, the greatest part of them being sick, and most of the towns being infected with a spotted fever. Whilst we are repairing the breaches of the town, and getting provision to it, I shall have some ease and quiet for seven days, which time I intend to employ in drinking the Spa waters, in order to cool my blood; for I would willingly get over all difficulties, so as to have the happiness of living some years with you. I am told that our new ministers are very desirous of a peace, but the violence with which they threaten will produce the contrary; for the french will be heartened by it, and, indeed, our friends are apprehensive of what may happen.

"Having wrote thus far, I have this minute re-

ceived yours of the 13th. Upon the whole, the behaviour of the queen is such, that I beg of you, that you will not, on any account, be prevailed upon to write any more to her; and, I should think, the prudent behaviour for you should be, not to be in the way of being solicited. Whatever happens, I must be uneasy, since all my friends agree that I must continue in a post in which it must be impossible for me to succeed, as I have formerly done.

"God bless and preserve you, and give us quietness."

CHAPTER 89.

1710.

New and more violent altercations between the duchess and the queen. — Their final interview. — Increasing eagerness of the queen to liberate herself from the importunate presence of her former favourite. — Continuation of the cabals of Harley. — He persuades the queen to adopt a regular plan for the dissolution of the ministry. — The duke of Shrewsbury appointed lord chamberlain, without the knowledge of the other ministers. — Conduct of Godolphin on this occasion. — His correspondence and interviews with the queen.

WHILE the duke of Marlborough was employed in the siege of Douay, he was mortified by a rapid succession of political events, in the court and cabinet, which portended the most fatal consequences, not only to himself, but to the welfare of England and Europe. These were the final rupture between the queen and the duchess, the appointment of the duke of Shrewsbury to the office of lord chamberlain, the struggle relative to military promotions, and the dismission of Sunderland.

We have already alluded to the promise which the duchess extorted from the queen, for the transfer of her offices to her daughters, and her suspicions that it would not be fulfilled. Influenced by repeated importunities, her husband was reluc-

tantly persuaded to solicit the queen on this delicate subject, and in the last audience before his departure, he made two requests to her majesty: the first, that she would kindly permit the duchess to remain in the country as much as her offices in the household would allow; and the second, that she would accept her resignation in favour of their daughters, at the conclusion of peace, when it was his own intention to retire. To the first request the queen acceded; and to the second, replied, that she could not think of parting with the duchess, but spoke of the reversion in so favourable a manner, as led him to suppose that it met with her approbation.

Soon after his departure, however, the duchess found that he had mistaken the queen's answer; for on returning her thanks for these kind assurances, her majesty preserved an obstinate silence, and when pressed to declare whether the duke had rightly understood her meaning, peremptorily replied, "I desire that I may never be troubled any more on the subject."

These repeated intrusions no less perplexed than offended the queen, and as she was determined to find a pretext for evading this extorted promise, she was doubly anxious to liberate herself from so importunate a visitor. Unfortunately, the indiscretion of the duchess soon afforded such an opportunity.

While the affairs of the cabinet were involved in mystery, and while rumours of changes in the administration were daily circulated, the friends of the duchess urged her to appear at court, and

endeavour to counteract these cabals, by her influence, or at least to shew by her presence that her party was not declining in favour. She, however, was too well apprised of the queen's sentiments, to imagine that her appearance would not be unwelcome, and might expose her to new mortifications. She, therefore, persevered in her resolution to remain in the country, until reports of her indiscretion, in speaking disrespectfully of her royal mistress, were industriously circulated. Her indignation being awakened by these imputations, she hastily took the resolution of returning to court, for the sake of vindicating her own character, or at least of proving to the public, that her interest was not absolutely lost.

On the 3d of April she waited on the queen, and solicited a private audience, for the purpose of making some important communications before her majesty quitted London for the summer. The request was, however, received with the most repulsive coldness. She named, in vain, three several hours, in which she knew the queen was accustomed to be alone, and at length was told to present herself at six the ensuing evening, the time which was usually set apart for the royal devotions.

Unwilling, however, to be importuned with so disagreeable a visitor, the queen retracted, and not only ordered the duchess to make her communication in writing, but hinted that she might immediately gratify the inclination she had expressed, of returning into the country. Notwithstanding this ungracious repulse, the duchess renewed her solicitations, and declined imparting the subject of

her application by letter. The queen, therefore, was obliged to appoint a new time; but before it arrived, again deferred the interview, under the plea of dining at Kensington, and repeated her desire for a written communication. On this second refusal, the duchess wrote a letter, requesting permission to repair to Kensington, and declaring that the information which she was about to afford, related solely to her own vindication, and would neither give rise to any misunderstanding, nor oblige the queen to make an answer, or admit her oftener than was agreeable.

On the same day, she went to Kensington, without waiting for a reply. The queen had just dined, and no one being in waiting to announce her, she asked the page of the back stairs, if he did not occasionally make a signal at the queen's door, to apprise her when any person was to be introduced. The page replying in the affirmative, she requested him to make the usual sign, and sat down in the window, as she says, "like a scotch lady with a petition, expecting an answer." After a long interval, which she conjectures was employed in consulting Mrs. Masham, she was admitted.

On her entrance, the queen evinced some embarrassment, and said to her, "I was just going to write to you;" and as the duchess was preparing to speak, interrupted her, by observing, "whatever you have to say, you may put it in writing." The duchess, however, remonstrated against such cruel treatment, and urged the justice of hearing her reply to the calumnies with which she had been assailed. She added, "there are those about your

majesty, who have charged me with saying things of which I am no more capable than I am of killing my own children; for I seldom mention your majesty in company, and then always with due respect." During this address, the queen contemptuously turned aside, and replied briefly, "there are many lies told." The duchess requesting to know the particulars with which she was charged, the queen alluded to the expression in her letter, that she did not wish for a reply, and several times interrupted her with the exclamation, "I will give you no answer." Notwithstanding farther solicitations, she still continued to repeat the same words, adding, at last, "you desired no answer, and you shall have none." The duchess proceeding, "I am confident your majesty would not treat me with such harshness, if you could believe that my only wish is, to do myself justice, and not to ask a favour;" the queen moved towards the door, impatiently exclaiming, "I will quit the room."

The duchess followed, and burst into a flood of tears. The queen appeared to be affected, and the duchess, after a pause, to recover from her emotion, proceeded to recapitulate the reports spread to her disadvantage, and implored her majesty to state the particulars, without naming the authors. The queen replied as before, "you said you desired no answer, and I shall give you none." The duchess, however, continued her vindication with great warmth and volubility. The queen heard her sullenly for some minutes, and then rejoined, "I shall make no answer to any thing you say." Notwith-

standing this repulse, the duchess asked, "will your majesty then make me some answer at any other time?" She received only the same reply, and in the agony of indignation, after a second flood of tears, more violent than the former, she said, "you know, madam, how much I despised my interest, in comparison with your service, and you may be assured that I would never deny any thing which I was aware was true, conscious as I am that I have done nothing to displease you." She could, however, only extort the former reply, "you desired no answer, and you shall have none." Perceiving it fruitless to persist, she made her obeisance, and exclaimed with a degree of violence, which she herself does not attempt to justify, "I am confident you will suffer in this world or the next for so much inhumanity." The queen was roused to indignation by this unpremeditated insult, and replying, "that is my business," withdrew to the closet.

After quitting the royal presence, the duchess sat down in a long gallery to wipe away her tears, and compose her agitation. She then returned to the closet, and scratched at the door; and when the queen opened it, said, "As I sat in the gallery, I thought your majesty would not be easy to see me, when you come to the castle at Windsor, whither I understand you are shortly to remove. Should that be the case, I will refrain from going to the Lodge, that I may not be charged with a want of respect for omitting to pay my duty to your majesty when so near." To this the queen quickly replied, as if anxious to be freed from her

visitor, "You may, if you please, come to me at the castle: it will give me no uneasiness." *

Thus ended this memorable conversation, and from this moment all personal intercourse was broken off between the queen and her discarded favourite. The duchess, indeed, made an attempt to renew the discussion the following day, by taking an opportunity of forwarding a letter to the queen, from the duke, relative to a supposed plot for assassinating her majesty. In this she renewed her justification, and complained of the strange usage she had received on the preceding day; but the attempt did not succeed to her wish, for the queen returned the letter with a line simply acknowledging its reception. The account of this interview was forwarded to the duke, and reached him while he was encamped before Douay; but it was too late to remedy the effects of her indiscretion, and, in his reply, he merely exhorts her to refrain from courting similar mortifications.

"*May 5.* — I have this morning received yours of the 17th of April, O. S., from the Lodge, as also the account of what passed between you and the queen, which is so harsh, that I think you should be persuaded not to expose yourself any more in speaking to her majesty."

From this time, the duchess became as great an object of disgust and aversion, as she had formerly

* This account is drawn from a dialogue which seems to have been written by the duchess, soon after the event, endorsed, "Account of the Conversation with the Queen, Good Friday, 1710;" also from her letter to Mr. Hutchinson. There is a detailed account of this interview in the Conduct, p. 279—287.

been of favour and affection; and the anxiety of the queen to remove from her household so obnoxious an attendant, was one, among many causes, which induced her to accelerate the execution of those meditated changes which had been recommended by her secret advisers.

The same post which conveyed to the duke this unwelcome intelligence, brought also the news of the duke of Shrewsbury's appointment.

Since the departure of Marlborough, Harley and his partisans had matured their schemes for a gradual change of administration, with equal secresy and address, and proceeded to the execution of them so cautiously and circumspectly, as not to give at once too much alarm to those whom they intended to overthrow. The first act in this premeditated plot was, the appointment of the duke of Shrewsbury to the office of lord chamberlain, without the knowledge, or even the suspicion, of any of the members composing the administration.

In nothing did Harley more display his extreme art, than in attaching to his cause the duke of Shrewsbury; for he well knew that to gain him was to gain a host. Of all the noblemen in England, he was the most remarkable for politeness of demeanour, suavity of manners, and conciliating temper. Of him, king William used to say, he was the only minister that pleased both whig and tory; and, from his general popularity, he was designated the "king of hearts." He was regarded as a man of honour and probity; and though of a timid, versatile, and interested temper, was not deemed capable of acting a double part. In poli-

tical principles, he was considered as attached to the whigs, having been a prime mover of the Revolution, and appointed secretary of state through their interest.* In the latter part of king William's reign, he quitted England, on the plea of ill health, and retired to Rome. He was much esteemed by Marlborough and Godolphin, who had, in vain, pressed him to accept the post of master of the horse, on the accession of Anne; but he declined this overture, from apprehensions of a counter-revolution, and continued at Rome during the first four years of the reign. He maintained a friendly correspondence with Marlborough, and, by his instances, was persuaded to return to England. The two ministers were still desirous to introduce him into one of the high offices of state, but were prevented by the opposition of the whigs, who either suspected a change in his political sentiments, or objected to the advancement of one who had kept aloof from the dangers attending the change of government. So strong was their intimacy, that in one of his splenetic ebullitions, Marlborough complained to him of the tyranny of the junta, and of his desire to emancipate himself from their bondage†; but a reconciliation soon

* Shrewsbury Papers.

† This fact is mentioned in the diary of lord Cowper, in which he relates a conversation with Mr. Harley, when he was attempting to persuade the chancellor to retain the seals, and join the new ministry. We give it in the words of the noble writer: "Mr. Harley gave me the history of the three months past, short and broken, so that it is hard to be remembered; what I do, is, that the duke of Shrewsbury had found means, for four years past, to come privately to the queen; that the duke of Marlborough being at the duke of Shrewsbury's house, in Oxfordshire, soon after his coming into England, had complained to the

afterwards taking place, these complaints ceased, and Shrewsbury continued in retirement.

For these, and other reasons, he chose to reside in the country, under the real or feigned pretence of a weak constitution, and seldom appeared at court, lest he might create suspicions of being actuated by interested or ambitious views. Still, however, he supported the administration, and intrusted Marlborough with his proxy, in a manner implying the utmost confidence. Writing on this subject, he observes, "Since your grace was pleased to accept the trouble of my proxy, it is in so good hands, I think it much more sure to vote for the public good, than were I present to give it; and if any thing could give me a tolerable opinion of my own judgment in these matters, it would be the reflection, that in any parliaments I have had the honour to sit with you, I can't recollect we ever differed." *

In the political struggle for the dismission of Harley, Shrewsbury continued apparently firm in

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duke of Shrewsbury of his own and the queen's uneasiness at the tyranny of the junta; desired the duke of Shrewsbury's assistance, which he promised. That the duke of Shrewsbury, Harcourt, St. John, himself, &c. thereon, went into proper measures; duke of Marlborough never renewed any conversation of business with the duke of Shrewsbury; this taken ill; and of a sudden the duke of Marlborough and lord treasurer closed with the junta, and obliged Harley and others to go out."

If this relation of Harley be fully credited, the interview alluded to must have taken place towards the close of 1707, or the beginning of 1708, when Marlborough appeared so unwilling to part with Harley, until he had discovered his duplicity.

* Letter to the duke of Marlborough, in 1706.

his attachment, and announced it in an ostensible letter to a friend, for the purpose of being communicated to the duke of Marlborough, in which, after expressing his warmest hopes that all things would end at court to the satisfaction of the general, he adds, "I own it is hard at first to choose one's friendships well; but when they are once fixed upon a merit like the person's you mention, and their worth experienced by a long conversation, it is past my comprehending how that should ever be lessened or shaked, especially by the cunning insinuations of one*, who, every step she advances towards it, must discover the basest ingratitude imaginable to a benefactor, who has made her what she is."

About this period, however, we find Shrewsbury in intimate correspondence with Harley and the duke of Buckingham, both of whom pressed him to concur in forming an administration, consisting of the moderate of both parties, or, in other words, to the exclusion of the junta and their partisans. Shrewsbury made an equivocal reply, but shortly afterwards we find proofs of a secret meeting settled between him and Harley, in Oxfordshire, the intent of which was evidently to mature some political arrangement.†

At this period, if we may believe the duchess of Marlborough, Shrewsbury was offended because

* Alluding to Mrs. Masham.

† Letters between the dukes of Buckingham and Shrewsbury, and also from Mr. Harley to the duke of Shrewsbury, in the Shrewsbury papers. The two former letters are printed in Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 629.

lord Godolphin would not use his interest with the queen to procure him a pension; and with the whigs, according to a contemporary historian, because they had recently opposed his appointment to the lieutenancy of Ireland, which was conferred on lord Wharton.* He was likewise offended by the coldness which the whigs and the duchess of Marlborough had manifested towards his lady, an italian countess, originally his mistress, and whom he had privately married at Rome. Harley, acquainted with these causes of disgust, redoubled his efforts to gain a nobleman so beloved by all parties, and so highly esteemed by the queen. At his instigation her majesty condescended to flatter the vanity of his duchess by marked attentions, and offered to exalt him to some honourable station, which he could not obtain from the whigs. These offers and marks of distinction produced their desired effect.

We find him, accordingly, not concealing his aversion to the whigs, caballing with Harley, and obtaining frequent audiences from the queen, on subjects not confided to the ministry. Some hints of this secret intercourse appear in one of the letters from Godolphin to Marlborough, though, out of respect for the duke of Shrewsbury's character, he does not give credit to the imputation.

"*St. James's, July* 29. 1709. * * * At home politicians are busier than ever, especially Mr. Harley, who omits no art or industry to strengthen his party, or to spread all the malicious insinuations imaginable against you and me. If one

* Cunningham, vol. ii.

would believe lord Rivers, who is very deep in all their measures and designs, I mean the tories, Mr. Harley and lord Rivers seem to take it for granted, that the duke of Shrewsbury is very far engaged with them. Whether this be really so, or whether lord Rivers finds he will not be so much engaged as they desire, this is a little too deep for me to penetrate; but so far is certain, that lord Rivers and the duke of Shrewsbury join entirely in open dislike of lord Somers, lord Sunderland, and lord Wharton; and 'tis certain, besides, that the duke of Shrewsbury has lately been with the queen, upon pretence of speaking about his relations; but, as lord Rivers says, encouraged to it by Mr. Harley, to give Mrs. Morley right impressions, as he calls it. I must own this is pretty difficult for me to believe, but I do know also that there was very little occasion for the duke of Shrewsbury to say any thing to the queen about his own relations."

Shrewsbury maintained, however, his mysterious conduct without exciting any further suspicions; and, in the preceding year, we find him in the full confidence of the duke of Marlborough, and soliciting numerous favours for his friends and adherents. Nor does he appear to have altered his cautious policy until he had fully ascertained, from the testimony of the duchess herself, the decline of her influence, and the ascendancy of Mrs. Masham; and did not fully declare himself until Marlborough had departed for the continent.*

* We find this fact mentioned in the narrative of the duchess, on the conduct of the duke of Shrewsbury. Mr. Maynwaring also alludes to it in one of his letters to the duchess, without a date, but evidently written

He at length took a more decided part, during the memorable trial of Sacheverell, by warmly defending him against the accusations of the whigs, and exerting his influence to obtain a vote of acquittal. This conduct convinced Marlborough that he was perfectly acquainted with the secret inclinations of the queen, and encouraged by the prospect of the tory ascendancy.

After these transactions, we cannot wonder at the time or mode of his appointment. The queen availed herself of the prorogation of parliament, which took place on the 5th of April, the absence of Marlborough, and a temporary retirement of Godolphin to Newmarket. On the 13th, she sent for the marquis of Kent, lord chamberlain, ordered him to deliver his staff of office, and to reward his prompt compliance, promised him a dukedom. Without allowing time for intelligence of the proposed change to reach the ministers, she, the same evening, conferred the vacant office on the duke of Shrewsbury, and drily announced his promotion to the treasurer.

" *St. James's, April* 13.—I am sorry to find by your letter you are so very much in the spleen, as

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soon after the duke's appointment. The first part is missing. " But the same secret which made the duke of Shrewsbury come to your grace to pump how matters stand between the queen and your grace. Nothing but that he had been led into the secret of her power, and being naturally cautious and selfish, he would know whether there was any likelihood of your grace's returning before he would quite engage the other way. Could Mr. Harley or the duke of Somerset have persuaded the duke of Shrewsbury to leave lord Godolphin and the duke of Marlborough for them? Certainly not; but when he was convinced that the jade who had the favour was the entire creature of one of them, then indeed, he thought it was an interest worth espousing."

to think you cannot for the future contribute any thing towards my quiet, but your wishes; however, I will still hope you will use your endeavours; for by all one sees and hears every day, as things stand at present, I think one can expect nothing but confusion. I am sure, for my part, I shall be ready to join with all my friends in every thing that is reasonable, to allay the heat and ferment that is in this poor nation. Since you went to Newmarket, I have received several assurances from the duke of Shrewsbury, of his readiness to serve me upon all occasions, and his willingness to come into my service, which offer I was very willing to accept of, having a very good opinion of him, and believing he may be of great use in these troublesome times. For these reasons, I have resolved to part with the duke of Kent, who, as I hope, will be easy in this matter, by being made a duke. And I hope that this change will meet with your approbation, which I wish I may have in all my actions. I have not yet declared my intentions of giving the staff and the key to the duke of Shrewsbury, because I would be the first to acquaint you with it." *

A minister of the least spirit and foresight would not have tamely submitted to this affront; he would have instantly quitted a situation irksome in itself, in which he could not serve his country with satisfaction or advantage to the public, and which he himself compared to that of a galley-slave. Yet, on this occasion, Godolphin displayed the natural

* Oldmixon, p. 447.

indecision of his character. In an immediate answer to the queen, written on the 15th, from Newmarket, he remonstrated, indeed, with manly firmness and conscious integrity, on the inconsistency of her conduct, in suffering herself to be directed by a private ministry, while she withheld her confidence from her official servants. He dwelt on the ruin and destruction which such a conduct would draw on herself and on the kingdom, and anticipated the dissolution of that parliament, which had served her with so much zeal and fidelity. After inveighing on the recent conduct of the duke of Shrewsbury, developing his cabals with Harley, and his co-operation with the tories, he continued, "What consequence can this possibly have, but to make every man that is now in your cabinet council, except the *duke of* * *Somerset*, to run from it as they would from the plague; and I leave it to your majesty to judge what effect this entire change of your ministers will have among your allies abroad, and how well this war is like to be carried on in their opinions, by those who have all along opposed and obstructed it, and who will like any peace the better, the more it leaves France at liberty to take their time of imposing the Pretender upon this country."

He expatiated with the same prophetic spirit, on the consequences of such a change, both abroad

* In the copy of this letter, which is printed in the Conduct, the duchess leaves a blank for this name, which, from a draught of the original and other vouchers, means the duke of Somerset. The name is generally erased in the manuscript letters of the duchess, because in her later days, when she arranged her papers, and wrote occasional narratives, she was reconciled to him, and wished to obliterate all traces of his former defection.

and at home, and the heavy responsibility which it would draw upon her new advisers. He then complained of the mortifying mode in which the change was made, without the smallest communication either to the duke of Marlborough or to himself.

It would have been natural to expect that this manly and keen remonstrance would be the prelude to an immediate resignation: but as if reflection had conquered his firmness, he thus terminated his letter. "However, for my own part, I most humbly beg leave to assure your majesty, I will never give the least obstruction to your measures, or to any ministers you shall please to employ. And I must beg further to make two humble requests to your majesty; the one, that you will allow me to pass the remainder of my life always out of London, where I may find most ease and quiet: the other, that you would keep this letter, and read it again about next Christmas, and then be pleased to make your own judgment, who hath given you the best and most faithful advice."

Such a conclusion must have afforded the highest gratification to the queen and her advisers, and have convinced them that they had no opposition to dread in the prosecution of their intended designs: their opinion was confirmed by his subsequent conduct.

Returning on the 16th from Newmarket, the treasurer waited on the queen. Before he attempted to make any representation, she reproached him, by observing, that none of the whigs had been so uneasy at this change as himself.

He replied, "If that be true, the reason is, because they will not suffer themselves to be provoked by the folly and madness of others, to draw irrecoverable ruin on those who had not deserved it, as well as on those who had. But I believe that my letter, when it is too late, will be found a true prophecy of what will happen." The queen rejoining, in a confused manner, that she desired no further altercations, he said, "the reports of the town run high on that subject." He made no other observation, and her majesty hastened to conclude this disagreeable interview, by a cold and formal sign of leave. * Godolphin continued in his official situation, and conscientiously, but imprudently, laboured to soothe the irritation of the whig leaders, and allay the resentment of his friend the general.

In the first impulse of surprise and resentment, Sunderland expressed his indignation against Godolphin, whom he suspected of conniving at the change, and of cloaking his acquiescence under the plea of ignorance. But when he found himself mistaken in this hasty conjecture, he suffered his anger to subside, and approved the advice of the treasurer to weather the storm, for the purpose of preventing the dissolution of parliament. This opinion was adopted by Lord Somers † and the

* Letter from the treasurer to the duchess, April 17.

† Extract of a letter from the treasurer to the duchess, April 17. "I have seen lord Somers and lord Sunderland to-day; both appear to me to be mortified as much as myself, but thinking it reasonable enough to dissemble. I believe the good news from lord Marlborough contributes something to that."

other leaders of the party; and Harley had the satisfaction to find that he had nothing to fear from the collective resistance of the whigs, who seemed as deficient in spirit as the minister himself.

Although Sunderland and Somers appeared to be convinced that the appointment of the new lord chamberlain was not made with the connivance of Godolphin; yet many among the whigs and the public in general were not undeceived for a considerable period. The contemporary prints abounded in conjectures, whether the nomination was more agreeable to the whigs or to the tories; and though the duchess was persuaded that the duke of Shrewsbury would not be true to the whigs, yet the letters of her correspondent, Mr. Maynwaring, express doubts to which party he would adhere. Even so late as the 23d of May, we find count Maffei observing to the duke of Marlborough, "The new lord chamberlain whom the queen has chosen, has given cause to much speculation, and keeps the public in suspense, whether it is done in concert with the lord treasurer, or without his participation. This point is not yet cleared up, though the majority think he knew nothing of it." He even insinuates that Marlborough himself was not exempt from suspicion; in consequence of his constant friendship with the duke of Shrewsbury, and his known dislike of party violence. It was even surmised that he saw this nomination with secret pleasure, an opinion which, however groundless, injured him in the estimation of his jealous

supporters, the whigs, and which he had considerable difficulty in removing. *

When such reports could obtain credit from a foreign minister, it is not surprising that Marlborough should be perplexed with contradictory intelligence; and, perhaps, this painful state of uncertainty was one cause of his implicit submission to the direction of his tried friend and colleague in office. Unfortunately, the treasurer himself was continually vacillating between these contradictory opinions, and unfit to prescribe a decided line of conduct to the absent general.

The only obstacle, therefore, which the queen and her new advisers had to encounter in the spirit of Marlborough was removed; for they found advocates in Godolphin and the whigs, who succeeded in persuading him to pay due attention to the new lord chamberlain, and not injure their cause by displaying an ill-timed resentment against a nobleman, who might be inclined to act in concert with them.

* Letter from count Maffei to the duke, May 23.

CHAPTER 90.

1710.

Marlborough receives notice of the duke of Shrewsbury's appointment with equal surprise and vexation. — His correspondence on the subject. — Reluctantly persuaded to acquiesce in the change, and to court the interest of the new lord chamberlain. — Artful conduct of Shrewsbury. — Infatuation of Godolphin and the whigs in giving credit to his professions. — Continuation of the correspondence. — Struggle between the queen and the commander-in-chief, relative to the promotion of major Masham and colonel Hill. — Timid and temporising conduct of Godolphin and the whigs. — Forced acquiescence of Marlborough. — Indiscreet proposal to reconcile the duchess and Mrs. Masham. — Letters on the subject.

Marlborough received the first specific intelligence of this obnoxious appointment from the postscript of a letter written by lord Somers on the 25th of April, to congratulate him on his success in forcing the lines.

"After I had folded up this letter, my lord chamberlain came in, and told me that this afternoon the queen had let him know he was to go out, and to make way for my lord Shrewsbury. This being great news to me, I open my letter to insert it."

It appears singular, that this intimation from lord Somers should have been conveyed in so cold and indifferent a manner, as if the writer himself appre-

hended no ill consequences from the change. It is still more singular, that no previous hint should have reached the duke from Godolphin or the duchess, though in several of his own letters he alludes to the rumours of changes, circulated by the indiscreet conversation of the duke of Argyle, on his return to the army; and in one to lord Godolphin, dated May 5th, he observes: "Our letters by this post are full of changes that are to be, and of the duke of Shrewsbury's being declared lord chamberlain."

At length, on the evening of the day on which he had written the preceding letter, he received the formal notification from the treasurer.

"*St. James's, April* 17. — Last night I had the satisfaction of yours of the 24th, and do heartily congratulate with you on this prosperous beginning of your campaign, and am very willing to flatter myself with the hopes of its being no more than a prologue to greater successes. We have need of all this to support our affairs at home, and keep up the spirits of the whigs, who are mightily mortified and dejected at what has been done for the duke of Shrewsbury, as I have reason to be; but you will see my part in this matter best by the copies of two letters which I have desired lady Marlborough to send you by this post, one from the queen to me, and the other my answer to it.

"I have not seen the duke of Shrewsbury to congratulate him upon his new employment.

"P. S. I have seen the duke of Shrewsbury, but not so as to have any talk. I find most people are of opinion that he will like very well to live

easily with us, and I am not unapt to think so too. But I think 'tis very plain that he comes in by Mr. Harley; and the duke of Somerset * gives himself the air of it very much. But he will be one of the first and most mortified by it. You may easily learn by those who keep company with the duke of Argyle, what account he has of it from hence."

In a subsequent letter, which reached the general at the same time, Godolphin observed, April 20. "There being no possibility of foreign letters before the post, I shall begin this with giving you an account of a visit which I had the honour of this morning from the lord chamberlain. He was extremely full of professions to you, to me, and to lady Marlborough; and that by whatever door he came in, it was always with an intention and a desire to live well with us three, and not only so, but with all others we would have him live well with, not doubting, he added, that it would have been done much sooner, if you and I had been entirely masters of it; and that, perhaps, it was as well for us that it had happened in this manner, considering the jealous humour of the whigs.

"I answered with compliments from you and me, and did not doubt but our friends would be all in the same disposition; and I really find them

* The opinion held by this nobleman of his own consequence, and that which the party entertained of him, will appear from an extract of the letter from count Maffei before alluded to. "You know," he observes, "that there is a *juntilla* in imitation of the *junta*, and that the duke, who is called by the surname of the sovereign, plays the figure of a chief, although the others, who are of his society, make him depend on their counsels, and only make use of him to inspire the queen with what they think proper."

so for the most part, as far as they think the duke of Shrewsbury may be relied on, and they seem to think it the best method to be taken at present.

" His grace protested most solemnly to me that he never had spoken one word to Abigail in his life ; then, he said, the only sore place was, the difference betwixt lady Marlborough and the queen, and that all the rest might presently be set right ; this, he said, was going a great way for the first conversation, but that he desired to use all freedom with me. If you think fit to make any answer to this, I beg it may be in a letter to myself."

From his reply, the duke seems to have formed a juster opinion of the motives which induced Shrewsbury to accept the office of lord chamberlain, and of the ill consequences which it was likely to produce. He submitted, however, with a good grace to what he could not prevent, and yielded to the importunities of his friends.

" *May 5.* — I confess to you that I am very much surprised at the courage of the duke of Shrewsbury to come so freely into a storm : I think you and I may see very plainly by neither the queen's nor his ever taking notice of it to us, that they have another scheme than what would be approved of by us : however, I can't hinder wishing that the queen may prosper, but I think it is impossible for her to have any quiet or ease in the hands I think she is running into. If we have a battle, it must be the last ; for it will be in all likelihood in a plain, where there is neither tree nor hedge : I hope God will bless me with another opportunity of giving a mark of my zeal for the queen

and my country, and then I shall be less concerned at the behaviour I have received of late."

He expresses the same sentiments to the duchess more fully and emphatically, and announces his resolution to abide by the advice of the treasurer, and to act in full concert with the whigs on this, as well as on all future occasions.

"*May 5.* * * * It is certain the letter of lord Godolphin is very just upon the subject of the duke of Shrewsbury; for I am very confident he will prove a true prophet. I do not doubt of the whigs considering very well what resolutions it may be proper to take in this, I think, dismal conjuncture. You may be assured, and pray assure lord Somers, lord Sunderland, and whom they shall think proper, that I am determined to do just as they would have me, not only now, but in all the actions of my life. I do extremely admire at the courage of the duke of Shrewsbury to enter into a certain storm with, I think, the greatest knaves in the nation. His natural temper will lead him to give moderate counsels for a time. But if I know any thing of the temper of the queen, she would not have made this step, but that they are ready to go into all the extravagances imaginable. The chiefest care now should be, that the parliament be preserved; for if that cannot be obtained, which I very much doubt, nothing will be worth the managing. Of all things, the whigs must be sure to be of one mind, and then all things, sooner or later, must come right.

* * * * * * *

"I am so extremely uneasy at the letters I have received by this post from England, that I have no heart to answer lord Sunderland's till the next post. In the mean time, tell him that those are most happy, who have least to do with courts; and I am, with much truth, yours."

It is a matter of surprise, that knowing, as he did, the heterogeneous composition of the party, Marlborough could for a moment suppose that the whigs would act in one body, and in concert with him and the treasurer; nor is it less a matter of regret, that he should have yielded, though reluctantly, to the timid advice of his friend, and have been induced to dissemble his resentment at so insulting a proceeding, of which he foresaw the fatal consequences. If we may judge, however, from the integrity and disinterestedness of Godolphin, we cannot attribute his advice either to a thirst of power, or an anxiety to retain the emoluments of office, but rather ascribe it to a spirit of true, though misguided patriotism; and we cannot withhold our belief from his own asseverations.

"*May* 5.–16.—Yesterday I received the favour of yours of the 8th, with the inclosed letters from the pensionary and lord Townshend, both which I have had the honour to read to the queen. At that part of my lord Townshend's letter, which mentioned the foreign ministers writing from hence that the treasury is to be put in commission, she gave a sort of a scornful smile, but did not think fit to say a word to me upon it, and, perhaps, it is not yet in her intentions or thoughts; but what

she may be brought to in time, by a perpetual course of ill offices and lies from Mr. Harley and his friends, and no pains taken by any body for me, to break the force of those impressions, I am sure I cannot answer. But this I know, that as long as you are abroad in the field, and that your army cannot be regularly paid but by my particular care and endeavour, no slight provocation shall prevail with me to quit my post, though it is uneasy enough in itself, and would, in my circumstances, be intolerable, but that I know the public would suffer, both at home and abroad, if I should not contain myself till your return, which is therefore my present resolution. But the insolency of Mr. Harley and his creature is inexpressible. The duke of Argyle's brother and lord Rivers, and that sort of cattle, have as little management here, as you say he has abroad.

"At this time I am persuaded the duke of Shrewsbury's inclination goes with us, but 'tis impossible but he must have great measures to keep with the others; besides that, I believe he must needs be sensible there must be great difficulties in continuing well with us, upon the account of lady Marlborough's present circumstances. However, it is my opinion, that if you were here, he would speak so to you as to satisfy you, and, perhaps, would do so to lady Marlborough too, if he had an opportunity; but she has not been in town since his coming among us, and seems pretty fully resolved not to come into the way of that conversation. I am pretty sure it shall not be proposed by me, both because I think it would be disliked,

and that I think it is not the way to have it succeed; so that matter, as well as most others, must be left to Providence to bring about in its own time."

And again, May 12. "Upon the whole, considering the duke of Somerset's assiduity and inveterate malice, joined with the queen's natural disposition and weakness, you and I must expect as many mortifications, as they can find handles to give us, unless the whigs were disposed to give such assurances to the duke of Shrewsbury, as should make him think himself secure in acting with them, which treaty, I think, is very difficult to make in your absence, and would not be so in my opinion if you were here. But this matter will have taken its *pli* before that time, and, therefore, I conclude this uneasy subject, with saying, that in general we must take care to keep our temper, and not to suffer ourselves to be provoked, by the injuries done us by others, to make a wrong or unseasonable step ourselves; for that would not only be the greatest gratification to the duke of Somerset, lord Rivers, the duke of Argyle, &c., but also draw the blame of any ill consequence upon ourselves, which, otherwise, would fall, as it ought to do, upon them."

We cannot give any farther extracts from the interesting correspondence on this subject, because the letters of Godolphin are too numerous to introduce, and rather relate to his own conduct and feelings than to those of the general. We must observe, however, that they detail numerous conversations with the duke of Shrewsbury, dis-

playing the wily manner in which that artful courtier duped the veteran statesman, and the grey-haired politicians of the cabinet.

His conversations are characterised by a mysterious kind of jargon, ever varying and equivocal. Sometimes he represented himself as friendly to the whigs, and as devoted to Godolphin, Marlborough, and the duchess, and pretended that the queen did not design to make any farther changes. At other times, he expressed himself as dissatisfied with the whigs, and described the queen as decidedly resolved to abide by the promise she had made to the tories, of introducing some of their party into administration, as a reward for their zeal, when she was threatened with an address for the removal of Mrs. Masham. He declared, at the same time, that it was not her intention to dismiss the whole body of the whigs, but only to humble them, and to admit into her ministry moderates of all parties and all descriptions. Yet, in the midst of these professions, he did not conceal the dislike of the queen to lord Sunderland, and even hinted that his own friends were pressing for other alterations, and for his dismission in particular. He sounded the treasurer, whether his removal would excite alarm, and at his reply, that it would equally offend the duke of Marlborough and himself, he affected to lower his tone, and said, "For my own part, I shall never push any thing that may be disagreeable to the duke of Marlborough; and I will plainly own, that I can live much better with lord Sunderland than with some others, his companions."

When we consider this ambiguous language, and the public conduct of Shrewsbury, who often exerted his powerful influence in opposition to the ministry, we cannot but wonder at the extreme infatuation of Godolphin and the whig-leaders, who could for a moment dream of coalescing with a courtier of so versatile a character, particularly when Godolphin himself acknowledges that it was a fixed resolution taken by the queen, that no present mark of favour should be given, upon any account, to the whigs. It is still more surprising that Marlborough, knowing the temper of the queen, and the character of Shrewsbury, should be induced by the importunities of his friends, to solicit, through his channel, honours and emoluments for them or their adherents. Among other instances, however, we find him requesting Shrewsbury to assist in procuring the garter for lord Orford; but the application, though seconded by the treasurer, met at first with an equivocal answer, and afterwards with a mortifying refusal.

Things remained in the same ambiguous state, and Shrewsbury continued his specious and plausible professions, with such apparent sincerity, as still to mislead the infatuated ministers, who, wavering between confidence and mistrust, doubt and belief, still courted the new political favourite, and hoped, through his influence, to prevent the dissolution of the parliament, on which depended their continuance in power.

The duchess, however, possessed a greater degree of foresight, and forming a juster estimate

of his motives and character, still adhered to her opinion, that he would not be true to the whigs.*

As indicating her sentiments at the present crisis, we introduce extracts from her letters to Mr. Maynwaring.

"As long as the whigs fear an ill parliament, nothing can be done but by gaining the duke of Shrewsbury, which, I believe, is impossible, though I find lord Sunderland is pretty well satisfied with him. I wish I may be mistaken in my opinion. But what a melancholy reflection 'tis for the whigs, that now their fate depends upon gaining a man, that t'other day they would have thrown over the top of the house, if any body had proposed his coming into employment! Sure their bottom is not very strong, or else we apprehend shadows. If the first, I think they have been very much to blame to the lord treasurer and lord Marlborough; if the last, they must yield to the duke of Shrewsbury just come into the service."

And again. "* * * I am told that the persecution against lord Sunderland is renewed again, with more violence than ever, which I take to be a stratagem to frighten the men in places to comply with all the duke of Shrewsbury's designs for Mr. Harley; for 'tis certain 'tis they that govern the queen; and if the duke of Shrewsbury, who has sense, will come into all this violence, why did he make such offers at first? It would have had a better air to have come fairly and directly in to the tories; so that I really think all this is craft." †

* Letter from Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, April 21.

† Letters from the duchess to Mr. Maynwaring, May 20. and June 1.

This is one among many instances which prove the sound sense and sagacity of this extraordinary woman, when she was not inflamed by anger or warped by prejudice; and though she was afterwards induced by the importunities of the whigs to solicit the interposition of her husband with the duke of Shrewsbury, in favour of lord Orford; yet she soon resumed her opinion of his insincerity, as we find from an observation of the treasurer, in one of his letters to the general. "Lady Marlborough has been, and is still, so much dissatisfied with the duke of Shrewsbury, that I thought it would rather do hurt to acquaint her with your letter to him, to which this is an answer."

In the midst of the anxiety created by the sudden appointment of Shrewsbury, another mortification awaited the commander-in-chief. After forcing the french lines, he laid before the queen a scheme of promotion for the recompence of those officers who had distinguished themselves in the field; but, either purposely or inadvertently, confined the list of brigadiers to a single name before that of colonel Hill; and that of colonels, to three names before that of Mr. Masham. This proposal he communicated in a letter to the queen, which was to be submitted to her majesty by * Mr. Walpole, who officiated for Mr. Cardonel, as secretary at war, and he requested the treasurer to second it with his interest.

When Mr. Walpole submitted the lists to the queen, she immediately started an objection to the

* Mr. Walpole had been recently appointed treasurer of the navy, by the influence of the duke of Marlborough.

omission of colonel Hill and Mr. Masham, which she appeared to consider as invidious. She expressed the utmost anxiety for their promotion; but, at his instance, consented to refer the question to the commander himself, though she shewed a resolution not to relinquish her purpose. She was so deeply interested in the matter, that before an answer could be returned, she again sent for him; and, after much hesitation and preamble, pressed the demand with more earnestness than before; and, to give colour to the promotion of colonel Hill, she ordered that all the colonels of the whole year 1705 should be nominated brigadiers.

Meanwhile Mr. Walpole had made his report to the duke, and suggested the propriety of consenting to the promotion of Mr. Masham, with the hope that this partial compliance would satisfy the queen. To this suggestion Marlborough acceded. The queen expressed great satisfaction with his compliance, and colonel Masham desired Mr. Walpole to express his thanks to the duke in warm and grateful terms.

The point, however, of most consequence, was the promotion of colonel Hill; because, as he had been the subject of the former contest, the queen was more eager to manifest her authority in his behalf. She was also wrought upon by her favourite, who did not fail to exaggerate this omission, as a proof of disrespect to her majesty, and no less as a premeditated affront to herself. The queen, therefore, sent a third time to Mr. Walpole, observing, with unusual earnestness, "I am of opinion that the promotion of general officers

should not stop within one of colonel Hill: it will be considered by all the world, as done in particular prejudice to him." She therefore ordered him to signify her pleasure to the secretary of state, that three more commissions should be made out for colonels Gore, Hill, and Honeywood. To evince her resolution of making the other promotions depend on this point, she added, "I will sign all these commissions together, that they may be forwarded by this night's post."

Mr. Walpole respectfully represented the great inconvenience which this change might bring upon the service. He stated, that possibly there were twenty german and dutch colonels older than colonel Hill, who would not serve under him, and represented the perplexity this must bring upon the duke of Marlborough, to whom he had written by her command; he therefore begged she would stay for his answer. "Did you write to him, then," said she; "I thought not." "Not on Tuesday, madam," he rejoined, "but the next Friday, by your express orders; and your majesty said, particularly, that if he had any reasons against it, you would acquiesce." "O yes, I remember something of it now! But I am very well assured there can be no ill consequences from it, any farther than people have a mind to make them, and I will have it done. And I tell you plainly, but you shall not mention it to any mortal, that I have stopped signing all the other commissions purely on this account." "I entreat you, madam," he continued, "to think of it till you have heard from the duke of Marlborough. What a surprise

and hardship would it be upon him, to have commissions sent over for brigadiers under him, without his knowledge. He has hitherto been very successful, and does not deserve to be made contemptible." "Well, then," she rejoined, "I will do nothing till I hear; but, positively, I will sign none of the others." *

Marlborough, who had vainly hoped, by his compliance in favour of Mr. Masham, to satisfy the queen, was now involved in the greatest perplexity. On one hand, he received the strongest proofs of the queen's determination to enforce her orders; and on the other, he was assailed by the duchess, with reproaches for his servility in complying with the promotion of colonel Masham, accompanied with invectives against Walpole, Craggs, and Maynwaring, for having advised that concession.

These representations, which accorded with his own feelings, seem to have made a deep impression on his mind; and, in his reply, he expressed his regret that he had acceded to the promotion of Mr. Masham, but declared his firm resolution to persist in his refusal of gratifying the queen in the instance of colonel Hill.

He had scarcely announced his resolution, before he was assailed with remonstrances from Godolphin, whose timidity was awakened by the firmness of the queen, and who hoped to prevent a breach in the administration, by timely compliance.

* The substance of this conversation is taken from a letter from Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, MS.; and of Mr. Walpole to the duke.—Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. ii. p. 13—18.

He represented to his friend, in the most moving terms, that his refusal would be insulting to the queen, unjust to colonel Hill, and would involve his administration in great perplexity. "I find," he writes (May 22.–June 2.) "by Mr. Walpole, that you have not been easy in the matter of Abigail's brother. I am sorry for it, because it puts a difficulty upon your friends here, and nothing would so much gratify your enemies. The question is not so much what is wrong and what is right, but what gives a handle to the duke of Somerset to tell lies, and make impressions, where nobody has the opportunity of setting it right, or so much as of knowing it till it is too late."

Meanwhile the queen persisted in her resolution, and was with difficulty dissuaded by Mr. Walpole from putting so public an affront on the commander-in-chief as signing the commissions without his consent. He imparted this information to his patron, adding such arguments as were calculated to corroborate the representations of the treasurer.

Marlborough would probably even yet have persisted in his refusal, had he been zealously supported by the whigs; but, in the interval, he had found that he could place as little reliance on their zeal on this as on the former occasion. He, therefore, reluctantly yielded; but to shew that his compliance did not originate from his own conviction, he transmitted his letter to Mr. Walpole, and desired him to shew it to the whigs, that it might receive their sanction before it was presented.

Mr. Walpole obeyed his orders, by communicat-

ing this letter to the whigs, through the agency of lord Sunderland; and all united in commending his compliance. The letter was accordingly delivered, and the queen not only testified unusual satisfaction, but wrote to assure the general, that no mortification was intended to him. When the commission was signed and transmitted, she even affected to leave it to the option of the commander to make it public or not before the end of the campaign. Marlborough, who had yielded too much to make a difficulty on circumstances of minor importance, went beyond her request; and, sending for colonel Hill, immediately announced his promotion, before the commission itself arrived. *

Some of his friends, who either knew little of human nature, or in their eagerness to close the breach, forgot its inevitable tendency, exhorted the duchess to avail herself of this incident to accomplish a reconciliation with Mrs. Masham, and to attend at court as if unaffected by the influence of the favourite. They contended, that as the duke of Marlborough had gratified the queen in withdrawing his opposition to the promotion of colonel Hill, the opportunity for restoring harmony was too favourable to be neglected. But this advice, which would scarcely have been relished even by a person of the most mild and submissive temper, was indignantly rejected by a woman of so imperious a character, who, with all her failings, could

* Correspondence of Marlborough and Godolphin, MS.; Letters between the duke and Mr. Walpole, in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole; and Letters from Maynwaring to the duchess.

not be accused of hypocrisy or servility. The very report inflamed the whig spirit of her daughter, lady Sunderland, who testified her indignation in an animated letter.

" I did not thank my dear mamma by the post for your two kind letters, because Mr. Hodges was to go to town. When I heard the report mamma speaks of, of Mr. Masham's having something given him in the army, I did not think it wrong (as the world is made) for papa to humour the queen in it; but for the other, I own I hoped it an impossible thing for you ever to be reconciled to such a creature, even if it could do good, but that is impossible; it would, may be, let her do the mischief underhand. I dare say nothing will be ever right, but the removing her; and if that can't be, I hope she will join with the tories and not with the whigs, and then it won't be in their power to ruin all the world when there is a peace."

The duchess needed not, indeed, the instigation of her daughter to repel this humiliating advice; and her conduct, in this instance, was fully sanctioned by her husband. He testified his feeling on this subject in a frank and manly style, which shews affection for his wife, and a proper regard to his own dignity.

" *May* 22.—Your last letter of the 27th of the last month, in my opinion, judges so very right of our disagreeable circumstances, and what our behaviour ought to be, as well as the true judgment you make of the sentiments of great numbers of the whigs, that I have locked it up carefully, in order to read it often this summer; and pray be assured

that my resolution is, not only not to submit to Mrs. Masham, but to nobody; but that I will govern myself according to the judgment and experience I have had of this ungrateful world. This being my resolution, it is a very great satisfaction to me to find you are of the same mind; for after the many troubles and dependences we have laboured through during almost all our whole life-time, for the good of our children, I think it very reasonable, though we had met with no ungrateful disappointments, that we should, before we die, be masters of some little time for our own ease and quiet. I must flatter myself this campaign will give us that happiness. I agree with you that Mr. Craggs wishes us both very well, and has very good judgment; but I know his temper is such, that he cannot think any body is in earnest that talks of retiring. I have writ to lord Godolphin concerning the blue ribbon for lord Orford in the manner you desired; and I am so desirous to have it done, that if the duke of Shrewsbury continues to make expressions to me, and that you think it may do good, I shall have no difficulty in pressing him to interest himself. When he says to some of the whigs, that if the queen could be assured that she should not be made uneasy as to Mrs. Masham, she would never in her life-time think of the tories, I take this to be the expedient taken for the persuading the whigs to drop you and me, after which the lord treasurer must receive such mortifications as will make it impossible to be long-lived at court.

"I think it is very plain that all this is very likely to happen, and when it does, I am sure I

shall be more easy to see it any where than at court.

" As you now know my heart and soul, I beg you will not shew any uneasiness to Mr. Craggs, Mr. Walpole, or Mr. Maynwaring, but hear all they say, which will enable you the better to know what is doing; otherwise, I shall be here in great ignorance. For, let their politics be never so bad, I must not be angry with them, but endeavour, when I return, to make them sensible of what is right."

" *May* 29.—Since my last I am obliged to you for three of yours, as well as for the inclosed letters, by which I see there are great inclinations amongst almost all your friends, that you should, in appearance, live easy with Mrs. Masham. I did, in a former letter, desire you would not take any thing of this so ill as to have disputes and coldness with them; but, as to my opinion, I think you judge entirely right of this whole matter, and you may be sure that I will govern myself accordingly; for, to be emperor of the world, I would not give reason for people to believe any consideration would make me truckle to her. I can, for the good of my country and friends, live so as not to seem to know she is in the world."

CHAPTER 91.

1710.

Resolution of the queen to dismiss lord Sunderland. — Ineffectual attempts to prevent it. — Ambiguous conduct of the duke of Shrewsbury. — Correspondence on the subject. — Unsuccessful interposition of Marlborough: — Lukewarmness of the whigs. — The seals transferred from Sunderland to lord Dartmouth. — Marlborough prevailed upon to retain the command. — Further correspondence. — Increasing ascendency of the tories, and unpopularity of the whigs.

The greatest mortification which Marlborough experienced was, the disgrace of his son-in-law, the earl of Sunderland, secretary of state.

Harley and his partizans deriving additional confidence from the success of their former schemes, as well as from the timidity of the treasurer and the divisions among the whigs, felt no hesitation in pursuing their project, and selected for their victim that member of the junta whom they knew to be most obnoxious to the queen and Mrs. Masham, and whose overbearing temper had frequently disgusted even his colleagues in office. In this attack they were warmly seconded by the open assistance of the duke of Somerset, and the secret manœuvres of the new lord chamberlain, and did not, as on the former occasion, deem it necessary to conceal their hostility. Rumours,

therefore, of the intended removal began to be circulated soon after the appointment of Shrewsbury, and gained credit in proportion as jealousies multiplied between the two ministers and the whigs, and divisions among that party increased.

During this ferment of the public mind, and amidst the political feuds which arose while this great object was in agitation, the accounts which Marlborough received from England contributed to wound his feelings; as they all concurred in representing the pertinacity of the queen, the animosity of his enemies, the suspicions of lukewarmness or insincerity among his friends, and above all, the apathy and want of union among the whigs, to co-operate cordially with the treasurer in counteracting so disgraceful and fatal a measure.

We cannot more faithfully develope the political feuds at this critical period than in the words of the treasurer, in his letters to the duke and the duchess of Marlborough.

"*May* 29. * * * Our affairs here," he observes to the duke, "are a little more quiet at present, because the duke of Somerset is out of town, and, indeed, I know no other reason for it. I am every day more and more confirmed in my opinion, that as the duke of Somerset is the driver of every thing against lady Marlborough and you, so the duke of Shrewsbury's consideration for you, and the fear of justly *choquing* you, has been the only reason that has hindered the affair of lord Sunderland from being brought to a conclusion. But, at the same time, the duke of Shrewsbury knows the queen is under engagements to a great many of

the tories that were spoken to about the danger Mrs. Masham was in, as the queen was told; and that matter has been so aggravated since to her, and so many lies told by the duke of Somerset and others, as gives the handle for whatever ill expressions they please; and I believe it is chiefly the duke of Shrewsbury that has kept off the ill effects of them, for the reasons I have told you. At the same time, I don't think that he has any thoughts of living at all well with the whigs, or of trusting them so as to lose his hold with the others, or not to make his court to the queen; but as far as it is possible to him to keep off violent extremities till your arrival, I think he will try to do it. Now, this being the case, I offer it to your reflection, whether it might not be proper for you to write to the duke of Shrewsbury, taking notice of the rumours which are on that side the water concerning lord Sunderland, and how they do not only affect you really, but are thought to do so to that degree, that whatever your own inclination might be, it must needs make you absolutely incapable of being of any use afterwards, either where you are, or with the dutch, who would presently not fail to take care of themselves, by making their own terms, and that you thought it necessary to say this to the duke of Shrewsbury for the queen's sake, knowing very well that whatever I could say of this kind to her majesty, it would be imputed to my partiality. I cannot but think such a letter as this might do good, and I don't see what hurt it could do; but you can judge best how far it is easy or not to yourself.

" Lord Halifax, lord president, lord Sunderland, and generally the rest of the whigs, are so uneasy, that they are ready to make their court to Mr. Harley, who appears as ready to receive it, and is making advances and professions almost to every one that he thinks our friends. He has been twice with the duke of Hamilton; he has sent twice to Mr. Boyle, and is exceedingly desirous to be thought moderate; the lord president and lord Sunderland are always employing lord Halifax or the duke of Newcastle to him, or to the duke of Shrewsbury. I think they are in the wrong to do so. I stand stock still, and make the same answer to abundance of applications, and even from the very best of the tories; viz., that while you are absent, I can only thank them, but cannot enter into any engagement without you." * * *

" *May* 30. — Having read over my letter again this morning, I find it so long and so particular, that I am quite ashamed to write any more upon these disagreeable subjects, and shall, therefore, only add that Mr. Vanbrugh assures me that the gallery at Blenheim shall be covered in before winter."

Lord Godolphin to the Duchess.

" *Thursday, June* 1. *at* 11. — I have received this morning the favour of your letter by the boy, and shall follow your orders in speaking to-morrow to the queen upon that matter, as well as I can; and all I have learnt since my letter to you yesterday from my intelligencer is, that to-morrow will not be too late for any thing I have to say upon that subject." * * *

He then mentions a conversation which he had with a person of great consequence, whom he designates under the name of *Swallow*, and whom we find to be earl Poulett.*

" He told me," continues the treasurer, " that at several meetings where he had been present when the affair of lord Sunderland had been pressed, the duke of Shrewsbury had always diverted it, *that was his expression :* the great drivers of it upon lord Sunderland, I understood to be the duke of Somerset and lord Rivers most of all ; but I think I can see pretty plainly by him and by the duke of Shrewsbury himself, that he (the duke of Shrewsbury) will insist upon something of that kind, and that the queen is more inclined to have it light upon lord Sunderland than upon lord Somers or any other of that set ; and, therefore, I must endeavour to-morrow to apply all my time to that particular point. I find, too plainly, by this man, that they have not left off the thoughts of parliament ; but they look upon that as a more difficult point. I wish it may prove so, for they seem to think they have the queen in a string." * * *

" *Thursday, at one.* — Since I had written the former part of this letter, I have been to wait upon the duke of Newcastle, who tells me that last Monday he had a great deal of talk with the duke of Shrewsbury, Mr. Harley, and Swallow, all

* In several letters to the duke, lord Godolphin calls this person lord P.; and we find in Bowyer's Reign of Queen Anne, that the seals of the secretaryship of state were at this time offered to earl Poulett, and were declined. — Bowyer's Reign of Queen Anne, p. 472.

together, and it was to tell him the same thing I was told yesterday, that the queen was still earnest in the affair of lord Sunderland. I found by the duke of Newcastle, that he expressed himself sincerely and heartily against it; but that the arguments he used turned chiefly against him that was named to succeed, and not upon the main point which related to lord Marlborough, though he says he did mention that also, to that company together. Upon this, I tried to persuade him to go to the queen, and to try all that matter which relates to lord Marlborough very plainly there, as, I told him, I did intend to do, but that I was sure it would have, as it ought to have, much more weight from him; besides that, I know by experience, that whatever was said of the kind by me, had less force with the queen, who always imputed it to my natural partiality. He said he would go, but, at the same time, I found he would acquaint the lord chamberlain with it first, and if he meets then with any objection, I suppose the duke of Newcastle will make some excuse to me. Swallow told me he was much pressed, and the duke of Newcastle said the same, to succeed lord Sunderland; but, at the same time, he would never do any thing of that consequence, without my good liking and approbation. I answered him, that if it were at a time, and upon an occasion where it was possible for him to serve with me, that I should be extremely glad of his company; but this thing, in this manner, and at this time, would make it not possible, upon the account of Mr. Freeman, for me to serve; and, therefore, I owed that return to the frankness and

sincerity which he had used to me, to let him know, very plainly, it was neither my intention nor my opinion that he should accept; upon which, he said he would go immediately, and send his final answer to the queen, which just now I hear he has done; for the duke of Shrewsbury has been with me this minute to tell me so, adding, that they will help to give some further delay to the queen's intentions, which he still appears to wish may not be uneasy to lord Marlborough."

We find also from the duchess, that lord Halifax, who is mentioned as the other agent of the whigs, made no scruple to declare that his respect for the duke of Shrewsbury was equal to that which he entertained for his other friends, which induced her to remark in a letter to Mr. Maynwaring of the same date, "I suppose he does not say less to him alone. So I conclude that the duke of Shrewsbury, lord Halifax, the duke of Newcastle, and Mr. Harley, are pretty near of one mind."

In a letter to the duke of Marlborough, the treasurer gives a brief account of these conversations in similar terms, and communicates farther hints on the projected change. To these hints and rumours of divisions between his friends, Marlborough replied in warm and indignant expressions to the duchess, testifying more firmness than was shewn by his correspondents in England.

"*June* 15. — We have received at the same time the two letters from England of the 26th and 30th. By yours and those letters you send me, I find there are jealousies amongst our friends, which is always a forerunner of distraction. You certainly

judge right, that whatever management the lord treasurer may have, he is in our true interests. I agree with you, that there has always been a correspondence between Mr. Harley and the queen, which makes it impossible for me ever to rely upon any thing that the queen may say or promise. In return for all the pains you take in giving me information of what passes, I have no return to make but that of my heart being truly yours.

" If I were to make the choice, I would much rather be turned out, than lord Sunderland should be removed; so that I hope all my friends will struggle with all their might and power; for if this point be carried, there is nothing disagreeable and ruinous but must be expected."

Impressed, as he appears to have been, with the fatal consequences of the projected change, he complied with the request of his friends, in writing to the duke of Shrewsbury, deprecating the disgrace of his son-in-law, and the dissolution of parliament.

" *June* 19. — My lord; The constant friendship there has always been between us encourages me to unburthen myself to you in this juncture, when every post brings fresh alarms of the removal of my lord Sunderland. 'Tis not his relationship to me, and the kindness I have for him that concerns me, so much as the effect it may have on the queen's service and the public; for as such a step will generally be thought to be aimed at, and must of course reflect upon me, it will, in a great measure, render me incapable of being useful to her majesty's affairs, either at home or abroad.

This is what I have solely at heart, and shall ever be unalterable in my duty and zeal for it. I own to you, were it not at this critical juncture, when, with the blessing of God, we have so fair a prospect of putting a happy end to this long and expensive war, which, I think, nothing but our own unfortunate divisions at home can prevent, I should be much less concerned; for I am persuaded the insolency of the french, under their languishing circumstances, is chiefly owing to the advantage they hope to reap from thence. There is another thing, I find, makes a great noise in Holland, and that is, the report of a new parliament, which, I am confident, would be such a damp to the dutch, as our enemies would not fail likewise to reap great advantages from. I must, therefore, entreat you to reflect seriously on the present situation of our affairs, both at home and abroad, and that you will give your helping hand, to prevent the mischiefs that are threatening us. I expect particularly, from your friendship to me, that you will be a support to lord Sunderland, and from your zeal for the queen's service and the public, that you will use your endeavours that the parliament may die its natural death. I have not opened myself thus far to any one person whatever; but as I have no reserve with my lord treasurer, you may communicate with him upon what I write; but as to lord Sunderland, I chiefly depend upon your grace, because what his lordship could say on that occasion to the queen, might be taken more partial than coming from myself. I am, with great truth, &c."

Marlborough had scarcely written this humble letter, before he was mortified with still farther accounts of the queen's resolution to carry her threat into immediate execution. For at the latter end of May the treasurer received a message from the duke of Shrewsbury, that the queen was very pressing to bring the affair of lord Sunderland, which had long been the talk of the town, to a speedy conclusion, and that it was only delayed on account of the difficulty in appointing a successor.

The refusal of lord Poulett to accept the seals, gave, as the treasurer observed, a little breathing time, but no more; for on the 2d of June, venturing to remonstrate with the queen, he obtained an unequivocal proof of her determination to accomplish her purpose. He said, "I cannot but take notice of the noise, which your majesty's intentions make in this particular, and represent the very ill consequences which I think will necessarily follow from doing an act which must unavoidably make the duke of Marlborough very uneasy, at this time especially, when the fate of all Europe depends upon his being encouraged and heartened. As for my part, I have so much dread of the effect, which this will have upon the duke in particular, and upon all the other officers in general, who are abroad, that I do think I should not do my duty without saying this much upon this subject." "The duke of Marlborough," the queen replied, "is too reasonable to suffer a thing of this kind to do so much prejudice to himself and to the whole world, by taking it to heart; and surely nobody knows better than the duke and

yourself, the repeated provocations which I have received from lord Sunderland." The manner of the queen plainly shewed that the representations of her minister made no impression; but he ventured importunately to insist against the unseasonable precipitation of this step, and added, that there would not even be time to acquaint the duke of Marlborough with it. This observation had some effect, and the queen authorised the treasurer to acquaint him with her intentions, though she had neither appointed the time nor the successor.

In communicating this information to the duke, the treasurer observed, "Upon the whole, if I have any knowledge of the queen, this blow will come in some short time, but, perhaps, will be delayed till you can write any thing which you have a mind to say upon it. I am very incapable of advising you in any thing of this kind. But because I think you will expect I should say something, I think you should have no scruple in letting the queen see, you cannot but look upon this thing, at this time, as a particular hardship and mortification to you, and pressed upon her for that reason by your enemies. But that, after having had the honour to do some successful services to her majesty and your country, you must beg leave to look upon your enemies as her enemies, and, therefore, will not suffer their provocations to hinder you from acting, while you continue in the field, so as may be most for her service and the good of your country."

Farther accounts contributed still more to augment his forebodings, and, on the 6–17th of June,

he wrote to the duke: "I am to acknowledge the favour of yours of the 12th, with a private letter to myself. In the former there is not much to answer. I did not send it to the queen, but took notice to her that you were more out of humour than ordinary, upon the reports that came over every post from hence. She did not seem very willing to enter upon that subject.

"What you say in your private letter, of our endeavouring to gain time, is certainly right, and every week we can delay the blow here, is a visible advantage to us; and, therefore, I hope your answer to my last, about the affair of lord Sunderland, will furnish me with some notion or help to break that blow, which still threatens, and I will, therefore, according to your commands, endeavour to make use of the duke of Shrewsbury as far as he will let me make use of him. But he is pretty mysterious, and seems in every conversation as if he wished for help, and wanted help from us, but without ever explaining against whom that help is wanted. Only he said to-day, that he believed that the duke of Somerset staid away on purpose, in hopes the affair of lord Sunderland might be ended, before his return, or that he might have room to impute it to other people, and tell as many lies upon it as he thought fit.

"As you seem inclined to follow my advice, in not being provoked to any rashness or precipitation, by any rumours from hence, so I will obey your commands in not being wearied out of my life, as long as flesh and blood can endure it. But if you find yourself under a necessity, for your own

sake, of serving abroad, as well as you can to the end of the campaign, notwithstanding the provocation you have every day from hence to the contrary, why might you not write plainly to the queen or the lord chamberlain, that it is not right to presume too far upon a man's good temper? and if he has so much mastery of himself as to resist such provocations, it is still a farther reflection upon those that can be persuaded to give them to him."

The letter inclosed from lord Somers is worthy of particular attention. It is querulous and discouraging, and shews the effect produced by the queen's attentions and the artifices of Harley, even on this upright patriot, and able statesman. Without adverting specifically to the intended removal of Sunderland, it indirectly announced the abandonment of his cause by the whigs, and contained a strong recommendation to Marlborough to repress his resentment, and not to suffer this last and most galling indignity to drive him from the service.

"*June* 6.–17.—My lord; I have been confined to my chamber for near a month; and as in that time I have seen several things pass, and feared many more, likely to pass at home; so I have had full leisure to consider alone, the critical circumstances of affairs abroad, which cannot but be much influenced by what is doing in England. Our enemies will not be in good earnest for peace, when they see us so busy in doing their business for them; and our friends can never think it reasonable to depend upon so wild a people. While

the expectations of the campaign amuse the world, every body is in suspense; but as soon as that draws towards an end, and the time of preparation for another year comes near, the dutch will begin to speak after their old manner, of their being exhausted; and what language we shall be able to use for their encouragement, or our own, I fear, is too easy to foresee! Whatever way I turn my eyes, I can discern no hopeful appearance, but from the army which your grace commands, and for no longer time than till that army must go into winter quarters. You have done wonders for us, and I hope you are reserved to complete them; and I am sure you will do all that is possible. It is very natural to say, then, why is the duke of Marlborough so impertinently interrupted, when he has the care of all Europe upon him? I have, I must confess, but little to say for myself, unless it be the owning, as I have done already, that I can see no reasonable ground of hopes, but from what your grace is able to perform this summer; and, therefore, to beg that you will have that just regard to the glory you are possessed of, as not to let any resentment, or any contrivance, how artful soever, put you out of the way of carrying it on, to all the perfection it is capable of receiving. That will be to gratify your enemies. The most effectual and the most certain way of finally disappointing them and punishing them is, to take no notice of what they do, but to go on to make the utmost use of this opportunity, that so, by God's blessing, you may bring peace with you, and come home crowned with laurels; and then you may despise them, and

restore us once more to our senses. These, I hope, are your purposes, and that they may have this issue, is the most sincere desire of him, who is with all sincere respect, my lord, &c."

This letter was sufficient to convince Marlborough that Sunderland would be sacrificed by the whigs, who did not seem inclined to risk their own places for his preservation. He also received communications from Mr. Walpole, strongly questioning the sincerity of the duke of Shrewsbury, hinting at the lukewarmness of the treasurer, severely reprobating the tameness of the whigs, in suffering the removal of their colleague, and predicting its fatal and inevitable consequences.

"*June 2.* — The town has been this week in a new ferment about alterations, and, particularly, lord Sunderland was on Wednesday positively said to be out. Your grace must have better accounts of these things than I can give you; but it is plain to me, from my observation, that Mr. Harley and Mrs. Masham have the chief and almost sole influence upon the queen. The duke of Shrewsbury is with them, and when I see it, I shall believe that he differs with Mr. Harley as much as he pretends, which, I believe, is not much neither. In my poor opinion, there never was any thing of half the consequence as removing lord Sunderland, talked on so long, without some industry to obviate a blow that strikes directly at the whigs, and can scarce be thought on without regard to your grace, to whom I have such obligations and such a perfect honour for, that, let what will happen, you shall solely depend upon and govern me."

"*Whitehall, June* 6. — I think our affairs here at home in a most unaccountable situation. Lord Sunderland, it is agreed by all, is to be removed, and by none endeavoured to be saved.* I don't know what this means; but I am sure it must end in the dissolution of this parliament, and in the destruction of the whigs; and I wish to God your grace and lord Godolphin can be safe in these circumstances. I cannot tell whether you have been acquainted that lord Somers has written to lord Townshend, to bring about, if he can, that the pensionary should write to count Gallas, upon the reports that are abroad of the changes expected here, and to represent the fatal consequences that may attend such a step, and how far the States may be induced thereby to make an ill peace. This surely must make an impression upon the queen; or at least leave such a weight upon those, whose advice is now taken, that certainly the duke of Shrewsbury is much altered, if Mr. Harley can prevail on him, who is, at present, the only visible minister, to take such a step. Your grace is better advised; but I am fully of opinion, that if you can conceive that the lord treasurer is backward upon this occasion, too much cannot be said to quicken

* Three weeks before these accounts reached the duke, Mr. Craggs had already announced the abandonment of Sunderland by the whigs. "The junta have seen their very best friend in danger, without so much as attempting a rescue; and I have taken the liberty to tell them so, and they do not so much as attempt to give reasons to the contrary. But I am afraid their interest is very weak, and then the best understandings go for very little; but an honest attempt is in every body's power, and even that will give great satisfaction to noble minds." — Letter from Mr. Craggs to the duchess.

him. And pardon an over zeal, that thinks the saving of lord Sunderland deserves the utmost industry, which can alone preserve the parliament upon which the whigs entirely depend; and I am afraid your grace has no surer friend. But let what will happen, I am entirely devoted to your service, and will for ever be so."

In a subsequent communication, the treasurer also emphatically exclaimed, "The affair of lord Sunderland hangs over us still, like a cloud ready to break upon our heads, notwithstanding all that has been yet said, to shew the fatal consequences that must necessarily attend it." * He also repeats his exhortation, to apply to the duke of Shrewsbury, with hopes that his representations might suspend, if not avert the blow.

These proofs of the fatal want of spirit and union among the whigs, affected the sensitive mind of the duke to the highest degree, and drew from him a feeling letter to the duchess.

"*June* 15. * * * For my own part, I am only thinking how I may soonest get out of all business. All my friends write me that I must not retire, and I myself think it would do great mischief, if I should quit before the end of this campaign. But after the contemptible usage I meet with, how is it possible to act as I ought to do?

* * * * * * * *

"Would not you have, some time ago, thought any body mad that should have believed it would ever have been in the power of Mr. Harley and

* Letter to the duke of Marlborough, June 8-19.

† Walpole Papers, and Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. ii. p. 24.

Mrs. Masham, to make the whigs to remain tamely quiet. They are mistaken if they think this is to go no farther than the mortifying of you and me; for their ruin, and a new parliament, is most certainly the scheme. For my own part, I have nothing to advise; for if the whigs suffer lord Sunderland to be removed, I think in a very short time every thing will be in confusion."

By the next post Marlborough received the queen's message with the deepest affliction; and, in conformity with the advice of his friend, the treasurer, wrote an ostensible letter, for the purpose of being communicated to her majesty.

" My Lord; *June* 20.

" I have received the favour of yours of the 2–13th. What, by her majesty's commands, you acquaint me concerning lord Sunderland, has given me so much trouble, that I have had no rest since the receipt of your letter. You can be my best witness with what constant zeal, duty, and tenderness, I have, for these many years, served the queen; and though this winter I met with mortifications, I was resolved to bear every thing as far as, with honour, I could, in order to finish this war with the success and glory it has hitherto been carried on. This consideration not only made me bear, but also consent to the desire of the queen, for the making Mr. Masham and Mr. Hill generals, though neither had just pretensions. I am sorry lord Sunderland is not agreeable to the queen; but his being, at this time, singled out, has no other reason but that of being my son-in-law. When this appears in its true light, I am

very confident every man in England will be sensible that my enemies have prevailed to have this done, in order to make it impossible for me, with honour, to continue at the head of this glorious army, that has, through the whole course of this war, been blessed by God with surprising successes. I beg and conjure you to use such powerful instances to the queen, that she may be sensible, before it is too late, that the request I now make is much more for hers and the public good, than for any consideration of ease to myself. What I desire is, that she would be pleased to defer the removal of lord Sunderland till the end of this campaign, and then she may have the winter before her, to take measures with the allies for the command of this army, on which, in a very great measure, depends not only the welfare of England, but of all Europe. This is what I beg, in reward of all my faithful services; if it must be otherwise, and that nothing but my immediate retiring will content those that have at this time the power, I must submit with the satisfaction that every body must be sensible of my readiness to have served, if it might have been allowed with honour. When you have read this letter to the queen, I desire you will keep it for my justification after my death."

Before this letter reached its destination, Harley had taken every precaution to counteract the effect of the expected remonstrance. He had found it no difficult matter to divide the whigs, who were already at variance among themselves. One object of apprehension however still remained, the

dread lest lord Somers, resuming his former energy, should infuse a spirit into the heterogeneous body of which he was the organ and leader, and by his authority, unite the whole administration into one compact and irresistible phalanx. But, his integrity being unquestionable, and his attachment to his party too firm to be directly shaken, the influence of the sovereign was artfully employed to soften and neutralise his opposition. On the 12th of June, he was closeted by the queen, who, after announcing her intention to dismiss lord Sunderland, added, "I am well aware that your lordship will be very much concerned at this resolution, and, therefore, I have thought proper, as a mark of my confidence, to notify it to you myself. I do assure you, however, at the same time, that I am entirely for moderation, and do not intend to make any farther alterations. But this is a resolution which I have long taken, and nothing shall divert me from it." Awed by her manner and determined tone, he faintly represented the fatal consequences which would result from the removal; but more strongly remonstrated against the dissolution of the parliament, which, he conceived, would inevitably follow. The queen appeared to concur in his sentiments; but, after a long conversation, he withdrew, without the smallest hopes, as he himself declared, of saving lord Sunderland. *

On the following day, the treasurer received the duke's ostensible letter, waited upon the queen,

* Letter from Godolphin, Tuesday, June 13–24.

and read it to her, anticipating a favourable effect from this pathetic appeal to her feelings. But it seemed to make no other impression, than to create an uneasiness, from the consideration that the projected removal would be rendered more difficult, and the consequences more fatal. The cold manner in which she listened, convinced him that no arguments which he could employ, would produce a change in her resolution. He therefore founded his principal reliance on the influence of the duke of Shrewsbury. But here he was equally disappointed; for on reading the letter to him, the duke evinced the same coldness which the queen had manifested, accompanied with a seeming surprise, that, to use his own expression, it should be taken so tenderly by the duke of Marlborough. The treasurer, on quitting him, discerned no glimpse of probability that any argument would induce the queen to defer her intention.

The hapless minister was subjected to farther mortifications when he communicated the letter to lord Somers. This peer seemed, indeed, extremely moved and amazed, that it should have no more effect, but added, that nothing would so much gratify the enemies of the duke of Marlborough as his retiring; and, if he would have the temper to rise above their malice, and end this campaign, with that glory and success which the beginning promised, it would be a sure way to triumph over them at his return. This, he said, was best both for preserving his reputation and in-

terest, but allowed that it was a very hard doctrine to flesh and blood. *

The only remaining hope of the treasurer rested on a meeting of the ministers and their partizans, which was to be held on the ensuing day at the house of the duke of Devonshire; but the secret advisers of the queen, dreading the ill effects of any farther delay, prevailed on her majesty to carry her design into immediate execution.

On the same evening, she announced her fixed determination to the treasurer.

"*Tuesday, June* 13.—Just before I saw you, I had sent for Mr. Secretary Boyle, in order to give him my directions to fetch the seals from lord Sunderland; and I do not see why the duke of Marlborough's letter should make me alter my resolution, unless I could agree with him, that I had done him hardships, which I am not conscious to myself that I have, and I cannot think but all impartial people will be of the same opinion. It is true, indeed, that the turning a son-in-law out of his office, may be a mortification to the duke of Marlborough; but must the fate of Europe depend on that, and must he be gratified in all his desires, and I not in so reasonable a thing, as parting with a man whom I took into my service with all the uneasiness imaginable, whose behaviour to me has been so† ever since, and who, I must add, is, I believe, obnoxious to all people, except a few. I think the duke of Marlborough's pressing so earnestly

* Letter from lord Godolphin to the duke, June 13.

† A word omitted, probably, *wrong*.

that I should delay my intentions is using me very hardly; and I hope both he and you, when you have considered this matter more calmly and impartially, will not wonder that I do not comply with his desires."

On the receipt of this letter, late in the evening, the treasurer wrote an answer, again strongly deprecating any further mortification to the duke of Marlborough, and hinting that these vexations would compel him to withdraw from a command, which he could no longer hold with honour to himself, or advantage to his country. He then declared that he himself must follow the example. The queen was alarmed lest the execution of his threat should rouse the whigs from their lethargy, and disconcert her future projects. She, therefore, addressed herself to the feelings of Godolphin, and appealed to his patriotic passion for the glory of his country, and his concern for the reputation of his friend.

"*Wednesday morning, nine o'clock.*

"I received your letter last night, just as I was going to bed, to which I can say no more than what I did on that subject, in my last, continuing of the same opinion, only that I have no thoughts of taking the duke of Marlborough from the head of the army, nor, I dare say, any body else. If he and you should do so wrong a thing, at any time, as to desert my service, what confusion might happen might lie at your door, and you alone would be answerable, and nobody else. But I hope you will both consider better of it. Yesterday in the afternoon Mr. Secretary Boyle came to me, and I

then ordered him to go this morning to lord Sunderland for the seals, which I think proper to acquaint you with, before you hear it from other hands, and to let you know lord Dartmouth is the person I intend to give them to, whom I hope you will approve of."

This artful appeal made a deep impression on the mind of the treasurer; he smothered his indignation, and, reluctantly acquiescing in the proposed change, consented to retain his office. He, at the same time, resumed the opinion, which he had previously adopted, that the resignation of the general would be attended with inevitable destruction, and employed his influence over his colleagues to concur in preventing so fatal a measure. At the meeting held at the house of the duke of Devonshire, all agreed in the same sentiments, and thus Sunderland fell a victim, no less to the weakness and impolicy of his colleagues, than to the pusillanimity of Godolphin. The result of their deliberations was a memorial signed by all the principal members of administration *, excepting the dukes of Somerset and Shrewsbury. It was drawn up in the most impressive terms, exhorting the general to forego his resentment, and to retain the command, for the welfare of England and Europe, concluding, that they looked upon his continuance at the head of the army as the most necessary step, to prevent the dissolution of the

* Lord chancellor Cowper; lord treasurer Godolphin; lord president Somers; the duke of Newcastle, lord privy seal; the duke of Devonshire, lord high steward; lord Orford, first lord of the admiralty; lord Halifax, auditor of the exchequer; and secretary Boyle.

parliament; and that his resignation would be the greatest satisfaction to his enemies. *

Before Marlborough received this memorial, he replied to the communications of the 13th from the treasurer, announcing the dismission of his son-in-law.

"*June* 30.—I have this morning received yours of the 13th, by which I see mine of the 20th was come to you, and that what I so earnestly begged was no ways agreeable. I am not conscious of any fault I have ever committed to the queen, but I fear many towards God; and if that may be allowed for, by mortifications to me in this world, I ought cheerfully to submit. God forbid that any action of mine should turn to the prejudice of the queen, or the public welfare of Europe. I think any usage to lord Sunderland or myself ought not to be considered, when that is in question, and you may assure the queen my last steps shall be by me endeavoured to be full of duty, as all my former have been; and if it depended upon me, I should return with success, as I have done almost every year during the war, which is at this time much to be wished, since the french seem not to desire peace."

In the extreme agitation of mind, caused by such accumulated mortifications, he gave vent to his feelings, in a tone of unusual despondency.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*June* 29.—We have received at the same time from England the two mails of the 26th and 30th.

* This memorial is printed in the Conduct, and in all the contemporary histories.

The french army has repassed the Scarpe, the day before yesterday, so that they have obliged us to change our camp. I believe their chief design is, to destroy all the forage about Arras, to make, as much as in them lies, that siege impracticable. The duke of Berwick is gone post to Paris, and I suppose from thence to Dauphiné, where the campaign ought to be begun; but I do not expect much on that side nor on the Rhine. God knows what we shall be able to do more in this country. As it is like to be my last campaign, I hope he will bless us with some farther success, and that things may be made easier for those that shall succeed me; for, as it now is, my head is perpetually hot. This, joined with the disagreeable things I receive from England, makes me every minute wish to be a hermit. When you have read this letter pray burn it; for my desire is, that nobody should know my complaints, but that the world may continue in their error of thinking me a happy man; for I think it better to be envied than pitied; for there is no such thing as good-nature left in this world."

The same religious aspiration after retirement, is manifested in a letter, written on the day of thanksgiving for the reduction of Douay.

To the Duchess.

"*July* 7.—Yesterday being thanksgiving day, I was in devotion, and earnestly hope God will forgive what is past, and strengthen our hearts; so that for the time to come we may bear with patience the ingratitude we have met with, which he no doubt, in due time, will punish; for we, I fear, have so justly merited his anger, but no ways

have we deserved this usage from the queen. We must look upon this correction of his as a favour, if it atones for our past actions. As I would not be a favourite, were it in my power, my daily prayers shall be that you and I might be so strengthened by his grace, that the remainder of our lives might be spent in doing good, by which we might at last be acceptable to him. You do not give any account of how you are to pass this summer: I should hope it would be with your children, as much as possible, so that you might not be alone, which might give you so much occasion for the spleen. Whilst the queen is at Windsor, I should think you should avoid being at the lodge; but pray do whatever shall make you most easy."

In the midst of these perturbations, Marlborough had received the memorial of the lords, accompanied by similiar exhortations from the treasurer and from his son-in-law, with feelings of the most poignant kind; but, before he replied, he unbosomed his mind to his wife.

"*July* 3.—I have received, since my last, yours by Ostend, by the messenger and by the post. However uneasy or disagreeable it may be to me to continue in the hurry of business, I have not been so blind with passion but that I foresaw the impossibility of my retiring at this time, without inevitable ruin to the whole; so that I will comply with the desire of the lords. But I am in no ways convinced that my continuing will save the parliament; for Mr. Harley and his friends know the whole depends on that, and if the managing of the

duke of Shrewsbury can prevent that blow, I should think it worth while. At this distance I may judge wrong, but I must always let you know my opinion. After what has passed, I should think this will not find you in London.

" I have had an information concerning lord Somers, which I would trust nobody but yourself with, and that can't be till we meet. Be upon your guard as to what you say to him, and let nobody know that I have given you caution.

* * * * * * *

" For God's sake let me beg of you to be careful of your behaviour, for you are in a country amongst tigers and wolves. You have my wishes, and shall have my company whenever I can be master of myself.

" Since my last, the french plenipotentiaries being, with a good deal of insolence, returned to Paris, I suppose in England as well as here, we must not think of peace for some time. My mind is very uneasy, but I dare not vent my grievances, for most certainly my letters are opened; so that you must not expect long letters. But be assured that my heart and soul are yours."

Soon afterwards, he replied to the memorial.

" My lords; *Camp, July 5.*

" I am extremely obliged to you for the favour of your letter of the 14th of the last month, and must own to have been very uneasy of late at what was threatened and has now happened to lord Sunderland, not only for his own merits and the relation he bears to me, from whence it may be *thought* I was aimed at with the same blow, but more parti-

cularly for the sake of the public, which ought to be our chief concern. Nothing could *lessen* my grief so much as your friendly *partaking* with me, and as I shall ever be ready to own it in the most sensible manner, so I shall always have a just regard for the advice you give me, of which I can show no greater instance than by continuing my endeavours with the same zeal and duty in the service of the queen and my country, that those who do not wish me well may see nothing can make me *depart* from either, and the others be encouraged to follow my example. This I am the rather induced to, for that you tell me it may tend toward preventing the dissolution of the present parliament, on which I think, truly, our all, in a great measure, depends; and in hopes, with the blessing of God, we and our friends may be able to weather the storm that threatens us, which, under him, may be entirely owing to your prudent management. I am, with great sincerity, my lords," &c. *

In his answer to lord Sunderland, he seems to have lost his former spirit, and to have already imbibed the temporising policy, so strongly recommended in the memorial, as well as in the letters of the treasurer.

"*Camp, July 5.*—My lord; I am extremely obliged to you for the favour of yours of the 14th of June, and know you must have heard from

* The draught of this circular letter is in the hand-writing of Cardonel, with a few interlineations in the duke's hand, which are here marked in italics. He substitutes *thought* for *inferred; lessen* for *alleviate; partaking* for *sympathising;* and *depart* for *deviate.*

other hands the uneasiness I have been under of late on your account, as well as the pains I have taken to prevent what has now happened, not only for your sake, but likewise for the public. I am sorry to see by your letter our new great man should have played so unfriendly a part in this business. However, if you would be advised by me, you and all our friends should endeavour to temporise, not only with him, but even with any others they may have reason to suspect play the same game. For my own part, there is nothing I desire so much as to retire; but you know how positively the contrary is insisted on at this juncture, by those whose advice my own inclinations as well as my obligations to them would lead me to follow; and the continuing of the present parliament, on which, I think, all depends, being the chief motive, I wish a good peace would enable me to do it. Till then, nothing under God, but the prudent management of our friends, can prevent the storm that threatens us." *

We likewise insert two letters to the treasurer and the duchess, and one to the duke of Shrewsbury, which he wrote at the earnest request of his friend. They will mutually explain each other.

To Lord Godolphin.

" I take the liberty of putting several letters under your cover, rather than to let the messenger deliver them; that to the lords you will give yourself, and for lady Marlborough, from henceforward I shall send it always under your cover, for I hope

* By the same post he wrote briefly in the same strain to Mr. Walpole. — See Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. ii. 4to. p. 31.

she will not be prevailed upon to come to town; for, in my opinion, the intercourse of letters between the queen and herself has no other end than making things worse. The inclosed, which I send open, to the duke of Shrewsbury, I leave it to your discretion of giving or not giving, for if he be afraid of living civilly with lady Marlborough, I can have nothing to do with him; on the other side, I think the consequence of preserving this parliament is of so much consequence to the queen and nation, that I would omit nothing that could be in my power; for I am as sure as I can be of any thing in this world, that if this parliament be broke, the queen's glory and interest is lost both in Holland and the empire, the fatal consequences of which you can best judge; so that let me, as a faithful friend, beg of you that if you can help this fatal step you will do it; if not, that you will give demonstrations of its being done contrary to your advice, so that when men shall return to their wits the true authors may meet with their reward. If you think it can be of any use, you may let the duke of Shrewsbury know my opinion of a new parliament. This going by a safe hand, I do not make use of the cypher; otherwise, I shall never fail, believing Mr. Harley has it in his power and inclinations to open my letters at the post-office."

To the Duchess.

"*July* 5. — Colonel Panton returned this morning, and I find by yours that you are returned into the country, which I am glad of, for you must have less disagreeableness than when you are near the court.

" The behaviour of the duke of Shrewsbury and his lady to you are true marks of what may be expected by you and me from the queen. However, I think all that is good depends upon the preservation of parliament. I shall for some time, at least till the winter, be desirous that you would be of my opinion, that the whigs should yet endeavour to take such measures with the duke of Shrewsbury as might hinder him from being desperate, by which parliament might be preserved. But if he will not be assisting in that, then the sooner the scabbard is flung away the better. I write by this messenger to lord Sunderland to the same effect. Keep your temper, and if parliament continues, we will make some of their hearts ache. I am, heart and soul, yours."

To the Duke of Shrewsbury.

" My Lord; *July 5.*

" I have received the honour of your grace's letter of the 16th, and at the same time that of lord Dartmouth's being in lord Sunderland's place. My age and circumstances make me not capable of tasting much pleasure, yet the assurances of your esteem and friendship give me great satisfaction. I am of opinion with your grace, that her majesty has not done this step to lord Sunderland, with intention to mortify me; but the world will consider him as my son. I shall speak very freely on this and every thing else, when I shall have the happiness of being with you. I wish the time were nearer, I mean by my being able to return speedily with a peace; but I fear the alarm which has been given has so far encouraged our enemies, that

they may less apprehend the continuance of the war, they having been always apt to flatter themselves. As I am convinced the queen does not personally mean any thing unkind to me in this change of lord Sunderland, so you may assure yourself that my behaviour shall be governed by what I shall judge may be the most useful for hers and the public good. But nothing but time can convince the world of this truth, especially when an acquaintance of yours, I mean the duke of Argyle, to the few discontented officers that go near him, has, for some time, told them that the queen was weary of my services, which would quickly appear by the removal of lord Sunderland. God knows my heart, that the true reason of the resolution I have taken of staying at the head of the army, is, the tender concern I have for the queen's interest; for I am, as to my fortune, so at ease, that nothing would be more agreeable to myself than a retired life, for the little time I have to live; and, upon my word, whenever her majesty's services can permit it, you shall see me live very contented. But this is giving you too much trouble, so that I shall end this letter with the desire of ever remaining yours, &c.

" Colonel Panton has this minute given me your grace's of the 21st. I have now only time to return you my thanks."

After he had dispatched this letter, he received the mortifying information that his address to the duke of Shrewsbury produced no more effect than his appeal to the queen, though he was still recommended not to break off his amicable intercourse with his former friend.

From Lord Godolphin.

" *June* 21.—*July* 2.—In my last, of last night, by the Holland post, I acknowledged the favour of your letters by this bearer, colonel Panton. I have read the letter to the queen, and also that of lord Townshend to me. It is next to impossible but they must make some impression; though I must own as little of that appears as is possible to imagine. I have also obeyed your commands in delivering your letter to the duke of Shrewsbury with my own hand, who, as you thought, shewed it to me immediately. As to the first part of it, which related to lord Sunderland, he said it came too late, and though it had come sooner, it would have still been too late; for that it was not, in his opinion, possible for any body to stop that matter. As to the other point, relating to the change of parliament, he could not but allow some of the arguments I used to him to shew the ruin and confusion that must necessarily bring upon all the affairs abroad, and, to say the truth, it would not less affect those at home. However, I think nothing is more certain, upon the whole, than that they are entirely bent and resolved upon that thing, if the circumstances relating to peace, and the influence such a step may be thought to have on that affair, will allow them to venture at it. And though those consequences which they have to apprehend, seem pretty plain and reasonable to impartial spectators; yet what determines them most of all is, that they venture more as to themselves, by not changing parliament than they can do any other way. These

are my thoughts, whatever the duke of Shrewsbury says to you himself, who promised to send me a letter this day, to return to you by colonel Panton. I agree perfectly with you, that the duke of Shrewsbury is much the most reasonable of them all, and has now so much credit with Mrs. Morley, that one would think he should look upon it as his interest to support the queen. And I can't help thinking also, that he must like better, and have more inclinations to live well with you and me than with any body else; though, at the same time, his behaviour to lady Marlborough seems very hard to reconcile with these notions of him. But I am not sure how far that may proceed from the certainty he may have of the queen's averseness to, and dread of lady Marlborough, and, therefore, thinks the least intercourse there is, the best for himself, till you return, and then, that there will be a necessity of putting that matter upon a better, or a yet worse foot, if that be possible, than it is at present.

"Thus much as to the duke of Shrewsbury. As to the duke of Somerset, though there yet continues a seeming fairness betwixt them two, yet his wings are very much clipped by the duke of Shrewsbury; and he continues still in perfect coldness and distance with the whigs and you."

CHAPTER 92.

1710.

Consequences produced by the removal of lord Sunderland.—Preponderance of the tories.—Alarm of the monied men.—Deputation from the Bank.—Reply of the queen.—Apprehensions of the allies.—Fruitless interposition of the States.—Letter of the Emperor to Marlborough, and remonstrance with the queen.—Epistolary controversy between the queen and the duchess.—Cessation of their correspondence.

If any thing could aggravate the insult offered to the whigs by the removal of lord Sunderland, it was the appointment of lord Dartmouth as his successor. Though a nobleman of honour and integrity, his father had died in the Tower, where he was detained for his devotion to the exiled family; and the son, if not imbued with the same principles, was, at least, among the most zealous of the high church party! Strange infatuation! that such a mark of hostility should not have roused the whigs, dispelled their self-delusions, and instigated them to adopt that spirited resolution, which could now alone maintain the honour of their party, a prompt and dignified resignation, which might have averted their fall, or, at least, have prevented a disgraceful dismission.

The disgrace of Sunderland made as deep a sensation in England as any change since the ac-

cession of Anne; because the two parties which divided the public sentiment, had increased in violence and animosity. By the tories, it was naturally hailed as the signal of victory. They laboured to avail themselves of the increase of royal favour and popular devotion, and of the antipathy which the sovereign and the majority of the nation manifested to the whigs. They accordingly exerted themselves in promoting addresses, from various counties and towns, in which the exploded doctrine of passive obedience was solemnly announced, of supporting the queen and the church of England against all republican, traitorous, factious, and schismatical opponents.

These addresses poured in like a torrent, from every quarter, and were feebly opposed, by the few which the whigs were able to obtain. The exulting party, conscious of the influence which they had recently acquired in the great body of the nation, and the encouragement which they received from the avowed sentiments of the queen, met these weak and ill-concerted attempts with greater energy and effect. Not only the principal agents in the political plot, but the jacobites and high tories, who had long abstained from attendance at court, now approached the royal presence, and presumed publicly to compliment the queen on her liberation from the thraldom in which she had been held. The duke of Beaufort, in particular, said, "Your majesty is now queen indeed."

But although the tide of popular favour flowed in this direction; yet the whigs still found numerous partizans in every quarter of the kingdom, and, not-

withstanding the apathy of their leaders, could not tamely behold the approaching loss of their long-enjoyed popularity.

As the monied men were chiefly of their party, they instantly caught the alarm; the funds experienced a rapid depression, and public credit was affected. The city of London partook of this feeling, and the following day a deputation from the Bank, headed by the governor, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, waited on the queen, to describe the injurious effect which the dismission of the secretary had produced, and to represent that any future changes could not fail of doing much injury to public credit. The queen replied in a manner calculated to dissipate the alarm, at the same time coupled with an indirect censure on this interference. She said, "I have for some time resolved to remove the earl of Sunderland, for particular reasons of state. I have no present intention to make any farther changes; but should I alter any of my ministers, it shall be no prejudice either to the Bank or to the common cause."

This vague reply produced the effect which was intended. Being considered as a solemn promise, that the lord treasurer was not to be removed, or the parliament dissolved, general confidence was restored; the funds gradually recovered from their temporary depression, and an opinion prevailed, that as no opposition had been manifested by the other members of administration, the appointment of the new secretary was not obnoxious. This opinion had a fatal effect on the interests of the whigs;

because it was an evident proof either of their weakness, their selfishness, or their impolicy.

The transfer of the seals created more sensation abroad than among the friends of the ministry in England. The queen had, indeed, endeavoured to prevent the alarms, which were beginning to spread among the allies, and to dissipate the unfavourable impressions, which the dismission of a whig, and the appointment of a tory minister were likely to create. With this view, secretary Boyle, in communicating this measure to the States through lord Townshend, directed him to represent, that it was not adopted with a view to diminish the credit of the duke of Marlborough, that it was also her majesty's intention not to make any farther changes, but to support the allies, and to carry on the war with the same vigour as before. The lord chamberlain also transmitted the same assurances, through count Gallas, to the emperor.

The treasurer availing himself of the apprehensions entertained by the allied powers, laboured, through their interference, to dissuade or deter the queen from future measures of the same fatal tendency. He requested Marlborough to persuade the pensionary and the emperor, to represent to the queen the danger of any farther changes in the cabinet, and in particular to deprecate the dissolution of parliament. In reply to this application, Marlborough observes; —

" I have writ to lord Townshend and the pensionary, as you desired. The latter is a very cautious man, and, I know, will not much care to trust M. Vryberg; but he is so sensible of our

madnesses in England, that I am confident he will do every thing he can, that he thinks can do good. He is of opinion that the methods the queen takes, is what will make the king of France not think of peace."

In consequence of these suggestions, the States presented a remonstrance by their minister, Vryberg, in which, after thanking her majesty for her assurance, they preferred an appeal no less earnest against any further changes in the ministry, or the dissolution of the parliament, who had carried her glory to so great a height, and so zealously promoted the interest of her kingdoms, and the welfare of Europe. This expedient, however, was fruitless, as the treasurer observes : —

" I commended Vryberg's behaviour to you in my last; but I have learned since, both from lord Halifax and lord Somers, that what he said to the queen has given a handle to the duke of Somerset and the lord chamberlain, to persuade her majesty, that the States have taken too much upon them, to say any thing to her concerning parliament, and lord Townshend will have some directions by to-morrow's post, to take notice of that to the pensionary, in the gentlest manner."

Marlborough, with his usual sagacity, foresaw that the farther interference of foreign powers would serve only to irritate the queen, and produce no solid advantage. In transmitting the resolution of the States to the duchess, he writes (July 10.) " Prince Eugene, on this occasion, has been very kind, and tells me, that he is sure his court will act

as I would have them. But I am of opinion, as in most things, the less one meddles the better."

There was, however, no need of any special application; for the emperor had already anticipated the wishes of the treasurer. On the first intelligence of the intended alteration, Joseph wrote in the most affectionate terms to the duke, deprecating his resignation, and inclosing a letter to the queen. We cannot withhold this striking proof of the emperor's esteem and confidence.

"*Vienna, July* 16.

"Illustrious Cousin, and most dear Prince:

"The intelligence of the capture of Douay and fort Scarpe was more agreeable to me, because your highness*, in those letters, was pleased to congratulate me personally; whereas, the principal cause of congratulation reverted to yourself, as this success adds new glory to your fame, and will render your name more illustrious to posterity. But the joy which I received from that messenger, is greatly diminished by the other, who conveyed from England the account of the change in the ministry; and I am more grieved from its commencing with the dismission of lord Sunderland; as he has in every stage of the war proved himself an able, a skilful, and faithful minister of the queen, and most friendly to the common cause. Altho' I learn that this blow has, in consequence of his affinity to you, deeply affected your mind,

* The original is 'dilection,' which is the address used by the emperor to princes of the german empire. It is here changed for an equivalent term, more familiar to english ears.

yet I cannot be induced to credit a report, that your highness is meditating to resign your military command, and to retire from court; for what could happen more fatal to the public welfare, or what more pernicious to the allies? or what counsel could your highness adopt, more detrimental to yourself, than, in the midst of your triumphs, and almost at the conclusion of the war, to desert the common cause, to throw away the merit of your former services, to excite the anger of the queen, to give scope to the vengeance of your enemies, and even to offend your best friends?

"Can your affectionate heart, even for a moment, indulge the thought of such terrible calamities, both to the public weal and yourself? by which the whole fruits of the war, acquired with such labour and glory, would be exposed to the utmost peril; and the almost desperate cause of the enemy, to the eternal reproach of your name, would resume new strength, not to be overcome by future exertions. I am willing to believe, on the contrary, that you will continue firm to the public weal; and be convinced, that whatever aid, favour, or authority, I can ever confer, shall be given to you and yours, as the prince of Savoy will tell you more at large. I therefore send letters to the queen, imploring her by the common bond of our friendship, not to take any new measures at this season, nor prematurely to dissolve a parliament, which has so well deserved of Europe, and that she would still continue to consult the present ministry, particularly yourself and the lord high treasurer, on whom great part of our public hopes

and happiness depend. I hope that her majesty will yield to my prayers, and still more, that she will repel the sinister arts of those, who can hope to attain no honours, except by the subversion of the common cause. Moreover, I confirm to your highness the assurances of my benevolent regard." *

In the letter to the queen, the emperor addressed her majesty in firm but respectful terms, thanking her for the explanation, which she had been pleased to give of her motives in the dismission of Sunderland, and for disclaiming any intention of farther alterations, which he strongly deprecated. His remonstrance on this delicate subject strikingly evinces the anxiety felt by all the allies; lest the perfect union, which had hitherto prevailed among them, should be shaken by any future changes; and he exhorted her, in the most earnest terms, to continue a ministry and parliament, whose counsels had so eminently promoted the success of the common cause. "Your majesty cannot," he concludes, "find among your subjects any, who, in parliament, could better second your generous intentions; or could serve you, either in your councils, or the management of your armies, with more zeal, fidelity, and universal approbation, than those who have the honour to be employed, and in whom you, as well as the allies, could place equal confidence."

The duke of Marlborough was deeply affected with the kind expressions contained in the imperial

* Official translation from the Latin original.

epistle, and thus announces his satisfaction to Godolphin.

" *August 2.* — I have received by this courier a very obliging letter from the emperor. The only satisfaction I have is, that I meet with kind justice from those on this side of the water; so that if you can think of any thing, in which the States and the emperor can be of any use, you may depend upon their acting as shall be desired, not only now, but in the winter. I must again tell you, that, as far as my temper will permit me, I shall follow your directions; though if one-half of what is writ me be true, I have been used most barbarously."

Joseph gave another proof of his implicit confidence in the duke, as appears from a private letter to the treasurer.

" The emperor having given positive orders to count Gallas, to observe and follow all such directions, as he shall from time to time receive from you and me, I beg you will, as soon as you receive this, send for him and speak freely to him, by directing him what language he should hold to his brethren, and also to such of England, as you shall think proper for him to speak to. I am sure that he will never make use of your name, but do every thing in his master's. This is absolutely necessary, for reasons which cannot be given in this letter. You must direct him to seem to keep a strict correspondence with Vryberg, by which we shall find if the latter be sincere; for I will answer for the honesty and secrecy of count Gallas, and I beg you will be open and free with him, for very good

use may be made of him; for he will speak to the duke of Shrewsbury, or any body else as you shall direct."

Neither the appeal of the emperor to the queen, nor the co-operation of Gallas, produced any effect; and the observation of Marlborough was verified, that in these delicate affairs, the less foreign interference the better. The remark of the treasurer was no less confirmed, that all arguments and remonstrances, however plain and reasonable, and from whatever quarter they came, would have no effect, on account of the prejudices and delusions, with which the mind of the queen was possessed, that all representations of that nature, were artifices of the general and himself, contrived, in concert with the allies, to alarm and frighten her.*

The feelings of Marlborough were more deeply wounded by the removal of his son-in-law, because it gave rise to the renewal of those *unamicable collisions*†, to use the expressions of a political writer, which involved the queen and the duchess in another epistolary litigation. The repetition of these female jars, however painful to record, is necessary to develope the plot of this political drama.

Since the fatal interview at the palace of Kensington, all personal intercourse had ceased between her and the queen, and the duchess retired to her lodge at Windsor, as if to avoid all future altercation. But the violence of her temper would not suffer her to preserve that respectful

* Letter from lord Godolphin, July 24.

† "The Other Side of the Question," by Ralph.

silence, which was both prudent and dutiful, and was so strongly recommended by her husband.

In transmitting to the queen an official letter from the duke to the treasurer, who was absent at Newmarket, she took the opportunity of writing a long and acrimonious remonstrance.* Adverting to the ill usage she had received at the last audience, she deprecated the removal of lord Sunderland, as a measure equally mortifying to the duke of Marlborough, and injurious to the interests of the queen and the welfare of the country. After expatiating on the services of her husband, and her own zeal and merits, she reminded her majesty of her former kindness to both; and to shew the change which had taken place, inclosed several letters written by the queen, in the warmth of her affection. After censuring the duke and duchess of Somerset, as the causes of this change, she inclosed a confidential letter, which he had formerly addressed to herself, and in which the queen was treated with little ceremony. She ascribed her own disgrace to the frankness with which she had given her opinions in favour of the whigs, who had placed the queen on the throne, and against that party who were in the interest of the prince of Wales. These reproaches were expressed in a disrespectful style; but the part of her letter which was most offensive, was that relating to Mrs. Masham. With a characteristic degree of contemptuous irony, which, even to an equal, would have been insulting, she attributed to this lady all the mischief which had occurred, or was

* This letter is barely alluded to in the Conduct.

likely to occur, and contended, that a dread of losing this favourite was the motive which had impelled the queen into the ungrateful and impolitic conduct she had manifested towards her zealous and faithful servants. She affected to treat with indifference the transfer of the royal favour to such a person; and after declaring, with a mixture of scorn and independence, that she would never wish for any address against Mrs. Masham, for the sake of regaining her own influence, she held forth an indirect threat, that the conduct the queen was pursuing, might produce this very measure, which would not fail to gratify all who loved their country. She concluded by desiring the queen to return the letter of the duke of Somerset, which, for nonsense, ingratitude, and good spelling, she considered as worthy of preservation, as a great curiosity, and as being the production of so eminent a politician.

The queen made no reply to this effusion, till the 12th of June, the very day preceding the removal of lord Sunderland. She then reproached the duchess, by letter, for breaking the solemn promise made by herself and the duke, that she would never speak of politics, or even again mention the name of Mrs. Masham, and concluded by observing, "But I shall trouble you with a very short answer, looking upon it to be a continuation of the ill usage I have so often met with, which shews me very plainly what I am to expect for the future."

Shocked at the breach of trust, which the duchess had committed, in communicating the confidential letter of the duke of Somerset, and

still more mortified to find that the effusions of her former tenderness had been treasured up by so irritable a woman, she added, in a postscript: —

"I do not return the letters, knowing they can be of no use to you, but must desire all my strange scrawls may be sent back to me, it being impossible they can now be agreeable to you."

Farther reports of her son-in-law's approaching disgrace, joined to the tone of the queen's letter, drew from the duchess another expostulation in a no less acrimonious style.

She testified her surprise at the queen's short, harsh, and undeserved answer. She justified her own breach of promise, in writing on politics and Mrs. Masham, by reminding the queen that her majesty herself had not fulfilled her own promise, of reading the narrative, which was presented in the preceding October, and giving a precise answer. She vindicated her present interference, on the plea that it was her duty to make every effort, to prevent the extremities to which her majesty was driving the duke of Marlborough, at the very moment when he was hourly venturing his life for the service. She contended also, that it was justice to herself, to vindicate her own character from the aspersions with which she had been loaded, particularly of attempting to procure the removal of Mrs. Masham; but she again held forth an indirect threat of the dreadful account, which the favourite might be required to render, for her advice, to ruin a man who had won six pitched battles and ten sieges.

With regard to the queen's letters, she stated, that the refusal to return them, would induce her

to take a little better care of the rest. She expressed also surprise that the queen should retain the letter written by the duke of Somerset, and declared, that though it had made no impression on her majesty, she could make other people ashamed for him, by shewing it. To prove that she was not herself singular, in her opinion of this nobleman, she inclosed several letters, in which, we may suppose, his character was not treated with great respect, particularly one from lord Rochester, who, she said, could not, in this case, be suspected of partiality. She added, "My concern for lord Marlborough's honour and reputation in the world, and the great trouble he expresses on this occasion, brings me to beg of your majesty, upon my knees, that you would only defer this thing till there is peace, or an end of the campaign; and, after such an expression, your majesty can have no doubt of my ever entering into any thing that can displease you."

To this letter the queen did not condescend to reply, and with this altercation terminated all direct correspondence between them.

This mass of mortifying intelligence, the dismission of his son-in-law, and the final breach between the queen and his wife, reached Marlborough at the same instant; and we find him, in his correspondence, expressing his deep resentment at the harsh usage of the queen, and at the same time testifying his concern, that the duchess should have so imprudently exposed herself to new mortifications.

CHAPTER 93.

1710.

Military operations. — Marlborough baffled in his design of besieging Arras, by the skilful dispositions of Villars. — Attack and capture of Bethune. — Domestic affairs. — Subtlety of Harley — Divides the whigs — Gains lord Halifax — Neutralizes lord Somers. — Slights and insults offered to the treasurer. — Attempt of Harley to conciliate the court of Hanover. — Design of dissolving the parliament. — Artful conduct of the duke of Shrewsbury. — Correspondence on the state of domestic politics. — Resolution taken to dismiss the treasurer previous to the dissolution of parliament.

Neither the mortifications which Marlborough experienced, nor the prospects of those which he expected, abated his zeal, or relaxed his military operations.

On the surrender of Douay, it was the intention of the confederate generals to besiege Arras, one of the last in the triple chain of fortresses, which covered the north-western frontier of France, and thus at once to open a way to Paris.

After devoting some days to the refreshment of the troops, Marlborough passed the Scarpe at Vitry, on the 10th of July, and joining Eugene, the combined forces marched in the direction of Aubigny. Halting on the 11th, at Vimy, until

their baggage and bread waggons, which had been retarded by the rains, came up, they reached, on the following day, the camp of Villers-Brulin, extending their right from the sources of the Lave along the Scarpe, while the left was stretched to the woods of Villers aux Bois, near the sources of the Lens.

On reaching this position, they found that marshal Villars, anticipating their design, had called in his detachments, increased his army from the neighbouring garrisons, and, quitting his camp between Arras and Oisy, had retired behind his new lines on the Crinchon, stretching from Arras towards the Somme. Deeming it impracticable, either to attack him in that strong post, or to invest Arras, while he occupied this position with an equal force, they turned their attention to Bethune, the capture of which would facilitate the reduction of Aire and St. Venant; and thus establish a continued communication with Lille; while it would open the way to Abbeville, and intercept that of the enemy with Calais. The occupation of Hesdin, on the Canche, which had been long neglected, would leave no strong place between them and the french coast. The skilful dispositions of Villars, however, prevented the execution of the project; and Marlborough acknowledged, with regret, the foresight and abilities of his able antagonist.*

On the 13th, the confederate generals detached from the main army 20 battalions and 18 squadrons,

* Considerations on the operations for the rest of the campaign of 1710, MS. — Memoires de Villars.

who invested Bethune on the 15th. It was defended by M. Puy Vauban, nephew of the marshal, and contained a garrison of 9000 men. The works were strong, but the necessary supplies for a protracted resistance were not fully provided.

Two regular attacks were made, under generals Schulemburg and Fagel; and the cavalry destined for the siege were commanded by general Wood. The army of observation, under the two chiefs, returned to the camp of Villers-Brulin.

When the allies had sat down before Bethune, Villars moved in eight columns upon Habarqe, near Montenencourt. This march seemed to indicate a design of attacking the open position of the allies, who changed their front on the 20th, and placed their left at Mont St. Eloi, and the right at Le Comte, in advance of Houdain. In expectation of a battle, Marlborough and Eugene made their dispositions, called in the detachment under the prince of Hesse, which was posted in the vicinity of Lens, and drew reinforcements from the besieging army. On the 1st of August, Marlborough advanced with a detachment to reconnoitre, and discovered that the enemy, instead of preparing to attack, were actively engaged in constructing new lines across the plain, from the rivulet Ugie, towards the Somme, and fortifying their centre at Avesnes le Comte. By means of this cordon of intrenchments, a new series of defences was established; the interior of France was again covered from incursions; and the measures

taken upon this spot, gave rise to the celebrated manœuvres, which illustrated the next campaign.*

Having no intention to risk the fate of France by an engagement, Villars merely carried on a war of posts upon the flanks of the allies, behind his new position; but these measures could not save Bethune, which surrendered by capitulation, on the 28th of August, and the garrison were conducted to St. Omer on the following day.

While the victorious general, in concurrence with his illustrious colleague, prince Eugene, was ardently promoting the glory of his country, and the welfare of the grand alliance, England exhibited a scene of a most melancholy and degrading nature.

A dissolution of political connections, and a separation of political interests, were rapidly approaching. The address of Harley was incalculably successful. Having obtained the full confidence of the queen, and secured the support of the tories, with the co-operation of the Jacobites, he continued to employ the agency of the dukes of Somerset and Shrewsbury, in deceiving and dividing the whigs. Wharton, to use the expression

* No doubt can be entertained that Villars acted with great ability in this campaign, by avoiding a battle, which, if lost, would have risked the fate of France, as well as by protecting the fortresses on the frontier, such as Arras and Ypres, the reduction of which would have exposed France more than that of the places captured by the allies. Nor did he deserve less of his king and country, by preventing the expedition against the coast of France. We are, therefore, concerned to find some of our historians severely censuring his military operations and representing the french troops as cowardly and panic struck. — See Cunningham and others.

of Mr. Maynwaring, had long been nibbling with Mrs. Masham; Orford was expecting the garter, through the influence of the duke of Shrewsbury; and the duke of Newcastle was on the most friendly terms with the two principal advisers of the queen, and hoped to retain his office of privy seal through their influence.

But of all the members of the junta, Halifax was the first who threw off the mask, and openly declared his defection. The secret counsellors of the queen induced her to confer on him the office of joint plenipotentiary at the Hague, from which, notwithstanding his repeated solicitations, he had been hitherto excluded, by the influence of Marlborough. The motive to this appointment, and the manner of effecting it, were equally disrespectful to the general. Halifax accepted the place, without the least previous communication either to him or the treasurer, and did not affect to conceal, that he owed it solely to the influence of the lord chamberlain. The motive, which was avowed for the nomination, was no less provoking. It was urged, by the enemies of Marlborough, that he had exerted his influence over lord Townshend, to obstruct the conclusion of peace, and that it was necessary to send over another plenipotentiary, for the purpose of counteracting this scheme. It is, however, extremely singular to witness Godolphin, with fond credulity, expatiating on the good effects which he expected to result from this appointment; nor is it less singular, to observe the other whig lords acquiescing in the same opinion,

"*July* 3. — This letter going by Mr. * Craggs, who is so well acquainted with the present state of our affairs here, will be shorter than I use to be by the ordinary post.

"I have instructed him to tell you it is my opinion our governors † do believe they have given so just occasion of offence to our present parliament, that there can be no safety for them, without having another, so constituted as to sanctify and approve what they have done; and the sooner they go about that, the more likely they think themselves to succeed in it, and I think so too. But the difficulty, and the only one that lies in their way, is the condition of affairs abroad, and the little certainty they have of peace, for which they are so impatient, that they would fain persuade every body, that you have no mind at all to peace, and that lord Townshend is guided by you upon this foot. I find by the queen this morning, and by lord Halifax himself, yesterday, that the lord chamberlain has prevailed with her majesty to add him immediately to lord Townshend. This is yet a secret here to every body, and Mr. Craggs will not be able to say the least word of it to you; but as lord Halifax has told me the story of that affair, I don't dislike it at all, for he has given me his word and honour, he will be entirely firm to the parliament; and, if so, he must be the means of bringing the duke of Shrewsbury and the whigs

* Mr. Craggs had been sent by the treasurer to the duke of Marlborough, for the purpose of imparting and receiving confidential communications at this critical period.

† Alluding to the duke of Shrewsbury and Harley.

nearer together, or he must lose himself, more than ever, with the queen and the duke of Shrewsbury. He has desired me to acquaint you with this history, and assure you, when he comes to Holland, he shall be proud to take your commands, in every thing, and never fail to shew you all the honour and respect imaginable. He has said so much on these points to me, that I am persuaded he will yet, either not go over, or go so as to be useful and serviceable to the parliament and the whigs, without which, I think, he will absolutely ruin himself."

After this communication from the treasurer, the singular letter written to Marlborough by lord Halifax, announcing his appointment, deserves a place.

" My lord; *July* 7.

" I cannot express how much I am delighted, that your grace has been pleased to oblige me in preferring captain Burton, it being a mark of your favour to me: if I may be believed, I have been more affected in being obliged to you, in several requests I have made, than fond of the thing I asked. I could not help being much concerned, after all the endeavours I had used, and the success I had had in your service, to find myself gone so much backward in your esteem and friendship. I hope now your grace will renew your former kindness to me; and the queen having been pleased to offer to send me over, to assist at the making of the peace, I shall have a particular occasion of shewing my respect and deference for your grace.

And as I shall not be willing to accept this commission, till I see a better prospect of maintaining our credit at home, so I would by no means enter upon so nice an affair, without the hopes of your favour and directions; and, if all the duty and observance I can pay your grace, can deserve it from you, I will omit nothing to obtain it."

Marlborough received these communications with equal concern and surprise, and not with the passive credulity of the treasurer. He could not be insensible to the want of confidence, which Halifax had manifested, by accepting an appointment in the same clandestine manner as the duke of Shrewsbury, and he deeply felt the unjust reproach, which was conveyed in the motive assigned. To the duchess he expresses his surprise at this extraordinary event.

"*July* 24. — Since my last, I have had the pleasure of yours by Mr. Craggs, as also one of the 4th, by which I see you were come to London. By the account Mr. Craggs gives me of England, I think every thing that is bad may be expected. Lord Halifax being employed in the manner he is, it seems to me very extraordinary; for I can't yet comprehend, how it should be agreeable either to the whigs or tories; or that he himself, at this juncture, should care to be thus employed: but so many extraordinary things happen every day, that I wonder at nothing."

To the treasurer he wrote with greater circumspection, testifying particular anxiety, that he might be furnished with positive instructions from

the cabinet of England, and relieved from all responsibility, in a negotiation, over which he had no longer any controul.

" I can't but wonder at lord Halifax being desirous of his new employment; but I shall have the satisfaction and advantage of his seeing the sincere desire I have for a speedy peace, which I am sure is very necessary for the affairs of Europe, as well as those of the queen; so that if you can, in England, give me any instructions, I would act with zeal. I am positively resolved to make no one step, but what I shall first be convinced is for the good of the queen and my country. I conjure you to take all opportunities of informing me what you shall judge best for our behaviour."

" *July* 26. — I have opened my mind so freely to this bearer, that I shall say no more in this letter, than that I am *white paper*, so that you and my friends may direct."

In this critical conjuncture, nothing was more necessary than a strict union between Marlborough and the whigs; and yet nothing was more difficult. We have already seen frequent proofs of his misunderstanding with Orford, Wharton, and Halifax. Somers was, indeed, the only leader for whom he entertained a sincere regard and respect; but the operation of political intrigues had recently interrupted their harmony, and we are concerned to find him evincing extraordinary distrust of his former friend. Several causes seem to have given rise to this unfortunate coolness. We learn from contemporary authority, that even Somers was disposed to think the power of the duke of Marl-

borough immoderate, and the emoluments and honours of his family and connections too * great. This opinion, doubtless, disposed him to listen with greater respect to the overtures of the queen. To strengthen the impression, which had evidently been made on his mind, her majesty was induced to honour him with particular attention; she affected to consult him in long and repeated audiences, on occasions of great delicacy and importance, and held out hopes of confiding to him the administration of affairs.† But we have too good an opinion of this upright patriot, to imagine that he was involved in any insidious machination, though, in delicacy to the personal feelings of the sovereign, he did not manfully interpose to prevent the disgrace of Sunderland. Perhaps, also, the suspicions of the duke had been awakened, by some unguarded expression, which the indiscretion of his wife called forth; and this conjecture is rendered probable, because the duchess, in many of her contemporary and subsequent narratives, dwells with peculiar vehemence on the neglect with which she was treated by this nobleman, both at this and subsequent periods. We also find proofs in the letters of Mr. Maynwaring of a similar impression on his part. From these combined motives, we are concerned to find

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 305.

† To this political stratagem, Harley and Bolingbroke afterwards frequently alluded, and made it a subject of exultation with their friends in their convivial meetings. It is likewise adverted to in the remarks of the duchess, endorsed on a letter from lord Somers to the duke, as well as in parts of her numerous narratives, and is mentioned by Swift, in his pamphlet on the change of ministry.

the general becoming suspicious of Somers, speaking of his conduct with great severity, and advising the duchess to be cautious in her communications with him, as he had found from several quarters, that he was not to be trusted. This fatal misunderstanding weakened the bond which united Marlborough with the whigs, and consequently prevented, till it was too late, their sincere cooperation.

The only remaining tie, which connected this heterogeneous body, was the earl of Sunderland, the violence of whose temper had rendered him obnoxious, not only to the queen, but to the duke and his colleagues in office, and occasionally, even to his mother-in-law. He likewise must have felt much displeasure at being abandoned by the whigs; and, therefore, his interposition, or his endeavours to restore their union, if employed at this period, were ineffectual.

In this state of conflicting interests and mutual jealousies on one side, and successful cabals on the other, the influence of the treasurer rapidly declined, and he retained the mere name, without the power of a minister. Neglect followed neglect; insult was heaped on insult; many of his applications to the queen were contemptuously rejected, and his devoted adherents dismissed from their offices, not only without an apology, but without a previous communication.

A mortifying instance of this kind, was the sudden removal of lord Coningsby, from the post of vice treasurer of Ireland, for no other reason than his devoted attachment to the two ministers;

and the affront was aggravated by the appointment of the earl of Anglesea to the vacant office, whose principal merit consisted in his adherence to the adverse party. Another mortification arose from the refusal of the queen to confer an english peerage on lord Dorchester. Though the treasurer did not scruple to lament to the duke and duchess of Marlborough his want of power, yet he was unwilling publicly to announce it to the parties interested. In one of his letters to the duchess, he says, "I had the same thought with you about lord Dorchester, and therefore took the occasion of the duke of Kent to speak of it to the queen, believing, besides, that it would be agreeable to you; but she would not hear of it, and I am therefore doing what I can, to hinder any thing else of that nature, or, otherwise, one must be forced to tell him, one has been refused. The old vice* has been intriguing about his brother, upon the same occasion, and for the duke of Hamilton. I find, notwithstanding all that has passed, that the whigs take his part, and would be glad he were pleased in this thing; but I don't see any disposition in Mrs. Morley towards it."

The queen even rejected his application to nominate lord Raby one of the commissioners of the board of trade; although it was the usual custom for the lord treasurer to appoint to these offices, as being in his own department. "Lord Raby," he observes, alluding to this refusal, "is not very easily satisfied, and if he were, it is not in my power to do

* Mr. Bertie, brother of lord Lindsey, and vice-chamberlain of the household.

him much service. I took occasion to mention his name, for the present vacancy in the board of trade, but it would not do. I suppose that is designed for some particular favourite, that is to be provided for."* On this subject Marlborough justly expresses his surprise.

"*August 2.* — Having this safe opportunity, by the courier that carries a letter from the emperor to the queen, I must open my heart to you. Is it possible that you can be so sunk in the queen's opinion, that she will make any commissioners of trade, or any other that belongs to your office, without first consulting you; especially at a time in which she seems to have most need of your service, both as to the credit, and the keeping her reputation amongst the allies, which I fear is very much lessened."

A still greater insult was offered to both the ministers, when the queen permitted lord Galway to return from Portugal, and transferred his command to lord Portmore without any previous communication.

We shall close this enumeration of insults, with one peculiarly affronting both to the general and the treasurer. Mr. Cresset was appointed on a secret mission to Hanover, the object of which was even concealed from the minister. He died, on the point of his departure; and a few hours before his death, he saw his papers and instructions sealed up, and ordered them to be delivered to Mr. Harley. The treasurer observed that Mr. Harley

* Letter from lord Godolphin, July 14.

betrayed great marks of confusion*, and was not relieved from his embarrassment, until the papers were in his possession. Both he and the general conjectured that the object of this mission was hostile to their respective interests.

The reply of Marlborough to his information on this subject, contains some curious observations, in a style highly honourable to his loyalty and magnanimity.

"*Aug.* 16. * * * * I am informed that Mr. Harley, in his conversations, keeps no sort of decency for you or me, by which it is plain, that the queen has no design of reconciling you and Mr. Harley, as was mentioned to me in a former letter. I know by the commission Mr. Cresset was charged with, what you and I are to expect. When I see you, you shall have the particulars, how I came to be informed of this business. When I tell you the whole, I should think you would be of my opinion, that it is impossible they should trust the queen with their whole design, for it is directly tying her hand and foot. I beg you will never mention this to any body; for though I think I shall have the glory of saving the queen, she must know nothing of it; for she certainly would tell so much of it to Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley, that they would for the future order it so that I should not come to know, which, otherwise, I shall know, all that passes. I am very sensible of the hard usage I have met with; but my own honour, and my love for my country, must not suffer me to take

* Letter from lord Godolphin, July 27. O. S.

any thing ill of the queen, but attribute my cruel usage to the influence of my enemies. Our extravagant behaviour in England has so encouraged the french, that they take measures as if the war were but just beginning; so that our new ministers will be extremely deceived, for the greater desire they shall express for peace, the less they will have it in their power to obtain it. For our enemies live by no other hopes, but that the allies will not have the same confidence which has hitherto been, but quarrel amongst themselves, which I pray God may not happen, and then every thing must go well, I mean abroad. I am ever yours."

We find in the correspondence, at this period, many allusions to this mysterious affair; and, however singular it may appear, it is surmised by the two friends, that the queen had been instigated to offer the command of the army in Flanders to the elector of Hanover, with a view to liberate herself from the control of the duke of Marlborough. It was even supposed that earl Rivers, who was soon afterwards deputed to Hanover, was at first charged with the same commission; but his instructions on this subject were countermanded, whether from the aversion of the queen, to confer the command on her appointed successor, whom she detested, or, as Marlborough supposes, from the refusal of the elector himself to accept it. We find also a very confidential and frequent correspondence now passing between the elector and Marlborough, in which the former expresses his determination not to accept the command, testifies full reliance on the good faith of the duke, mani-

fests his abhorrence of the insult offered to him, in the dismission of his son-in-law, and deprecates all future changes in the ministry, and the dissolution of parliament. He likewise ordered Bothmar, whom he soon after dispatched as his agent to England, to wait on the general in his passage, and act implicitly according to his directions.

The contemptuous manner in which Godolphin was treated, was rendered still more galling by a temporary change in the queen's behaviour, to which Marlborough briefly alludes in one of the preceding letters. She artfully affected towards him a degree of ease and cordiality, which seemed to indicate the return of former confidence. She conversed with him on what she called a moderating system, and appealed successfully to his darling principle, of admitting to the government the most temperate and able, without distinction of party. She even threw out hints of the advantage to be derived from a reconciliation with his former friend and coadjutor, Mr. Harley, though in so vague and cautious a manner, that he could neither reject, nor accept the proposal. Nor was this cajolery confined to her own personal demeanor; for the agency of Halifax was employed to increase the delusion. "Yesterday," he observes, "the lord chamberlain told lord Halifax, that the queen was resolved to make me and Mr. Harley to agree; to-day the lord chamberlain has sent him word that the resolution is delayed, if not retracted. By next post you may possibly have a little more certainty how this is like to end." * By this adroit appeal,

* Lord Godolphin to the duke, July 12.

she certainly wrought on the tory partialities of Godolphin, and at least cooled his zeal for the interest of the whigs; while she proportionately excited their suspicions again him and the general.

In the midst of this uncertainty, the fate of all parties depended on that of the parliament; and, therefore, the ministry were as anxious to ascertain, as the queen and her advisers were to conceal their real intention. At this period, the letters of Godolphin detail numerous conversations with Shrewsbury, in which we find as much address and diligence exerted, on one side, to discover the important secret, as on the other to conceal it. On these occasions, Shrewsbury displayed so much apparent hesitation and timidity, and such a wish to gratify the whigs, that the suspicions of Godolphin were lulled; he seems to have confidently relied on his intervention, and to have persuaded himself that neither the queen nor her new advisers would venture to adopt so rash a proceeding, as the dissolution of parliament.

On one point alone, however, Shrewsbury was uniformly consistent and explicit; namely, the queen's unalterable determination to consent to no reconciliation with the duchess, or permit her to resume her attendance at court. This resolution, though the most galling to the feelings of Marlborough, was yet the point least calculated to excite opposition, or create alarm among the members of administration. It gave to the pertinacity of the queen the appearance of a mere female pique; and even the whigs, however indebted to the duchess for her exertions in their

favour, had too frequently been thwarted by her imperious and meddling temper, to make her quarrel their own. Godolphin, also, perceiving the inflexible spirit of the queen, and conscious that the duchess had given numerous causes of offence, was not averse to acquiesce in this determination, and had no difficulty in persuading Marlborough, who likewise frequently regretted the vehement temper of his wife, not to insist on an accommodation, which in itself was impracticable, and to temporise till some expedient could be devised on his return. They both, therefore, laboured to reconcile the duchess to her loss of favour, and persuade her not to increase the irritation of her royal mistress, by any farther letters or remonstrances, which only served to widen the breach.

All, therefore, who were anxious to please the queen, treated the duchess of Marlborough with coldness, indifference, and disrespect. Foremost among these were the duke and duchess of Shrewsbury, of whose insulting behaviour Marlborough frequently complains, and even declares his resolution to renounce their intimacy, if they persisted in their contemptuous treatment of his wife. He likewise breaks out into bitter invectives against the new lord chamberlain, as the principal cause of all the mischief, which was likely to overwhelm the interests of the grand confederacy. Yet notwithstanding repeated accounts of their insulting demeanor, as well as 'evident proofs of duplicity, he was repeatedly induced by the importunities of Godolphin and the whigs, to solicit his interference.

We find the fluctuation of his mind strongly depicted in his numerous letters to the duchess, of which we present a few extracts.

" * * * * * If the duke of Shrewsbury, on this occasion of your letter to the queen, can do no good, I think it not much matter whether it proceeds from want of inclination or power. I do hope, before this, lord Godolphin may have shewn you a copy of my letter to him, on the subject of lord Sunderland and the parliament."

" *July* 17. — Since my last, I have had the happiness of receiving two posts, as also yours of the 29th and 30th, by Ostend. It is impossible to be more sensible than I am, of the outrages I meet with; but since every body thinks I must have patience, I must suffer for three or four months. I beg you to believe that I think I know the duke of Shrewsbury so well, that it shall not be in his power to impose upon me. I wish for the good of my country, that he thought it worth while; for if I could by it preserve the parliament, I should be pleased for some time to be fooled. Mr. Craggs writes me word that lord Godolphin has told him, he may in a few days be making a visit to me. The greatest pleasure I can have in his coming will be, my knowing whatever you have a mind to send me. By one of the letters of Mr. Maynwaring, which you have sent me, I see he expects you soon in town, which I am sorry for. I was in hopes you had taken your resolution of staying in the country till my return, and of never being prevailed upon again to write to the queen, which I beg you will continue firm to; for as things are

now, you must expect neither reason nor justice, but, on the contrary, all the brutality imaginable.

"I am forced to give over writing, fearing my temper might lead me to say what, in prudence, is better to let alone, in so base an age. I am, and ever will be, heart and soul, yours."

"*July* 31. — By yours of the 11th, as well as my other letters, I am prepared to receive the most disagreeable things that are possible. I shall consult my honour and my best friends, as to my behaviour, so as that I may have nothing to reproach myself; and for your behaviour, I beg you will make no one step, but as my opinion shall go with you; for it is not enough in an ungrateful age, to have reason on our side, but as things are, we must be sure to act with prudence and temper; so that again I beg of you to trust nobody but me, who love you, and will be tenderly kind to you as long as I have life. Your honour and reputation are mine, so that you are safe with me: therefore be not provoked to say or do any thing that may give our enemy an advantage. It is most certain the queen has been prevailed with to use you and me barbarously, but nothing should be said disrespectfully; for she would not act so, if she were not influenced by others, who follow their own interest more than hers."

"*August* 2. — I have received yours of the 17th, by Ostend, with the inclosed of Mr. Maynwaring of the same morning. By it I see the airs and deciding power of the duke of Shrewsbury. I think he will be the occasion of so much misfortune to all the allies, that for all that this world could give

me, I would not undergo the curses he must have. You will have known by my last letters, that I am very desirous, whatever happens, you should keep yourself in the country, and quiet, as much as is possible, till my return. For whatever you say or do, will, in this unjust time, be turned to your disadvantage.

"I am very glad the lords* you mention have spoken their minds freely and honestly at court. If they had done it sooner†, and will continue to speak truth boldly, the violency and nonsense of the duke of Somerset, and sophistry of the duke of Shrewsbury, could not prevail; but if it should, they will have satisfied their honour and conscience, and good men will think well of them. The king of France is so heartened by our late proceedings in England, that all the letters from Paris mention the great applications for carrying on the war. I have received a very obliging letter from the emperor. This goes by the courier that carries a letter to the queen from him, but you must not take notice of receiving any letters by him. Poor Cardonel is very ill at Lille; if he should die, I should have a very great loss."‡

"*Aug.* 11. * * * * What has been said by the duke of Shrewsbury, that he knows the way

* He doubtless alludes to the remonstrances of some of the whig lords against the dissolution of parliament.

† Some words apparently omitted in the original.

‡ In another letter the duke rejoices at the recovery of his secretary, in a manner highly honourable to his feelings and character: "For not only his having all my business in his hands, which must have been very inconvenient to have changed, but he is also a very moral, honest man, in an age when one meets with so many villains, which makes him the more valuable."

home, he may by it cheat himself; for a ruined people may be angry. Whatever happens, I shall continue my endeavours against France, so that my mind on that side shall have nothing to reproach me; and for my avowed enemies, I do, in a great degree, contemn them, and am resolved in my old age, to suffer for the good of my country."

We shall add another extract, which will shew the humiliation he justly felt, at the cold and unwelcome reception of his applications to the new lord chamberlain.

To Lord Godolphin.

"* * * * If after the two letters I have written to the duke of Shrewsbury I must be mortified, I am resolved to give no farther trouble, but conclude him to be as mad as the rest. I must own to you my weakness, that I can so little bear mortifications, that it is all I can do to keep myself from being sick. Pray let me know sincerely what the duke of Shrewsbury says, when he reads my letter, for I desire you will give it, and not send it him; for I can't yet persuade myself, that he can be so mad as the rest of the world."

However disposed to temporise, and to ward off the attacks of his political enemies, by patience and forbearance, even the treasurer could no longer mistake these accumulated indications of disfavour. The loss of that confidence, which he had so long possessed with the sovereign, the mysterious secrecy maintained with regard to the fate of the parliament, and the open hostility manifested towards the duchess, convinced him, however reluctant, that the dreaded crisis was rapidly approaching;

and, from his correspondence, he appears to have sunk under the apprehension of evils, which he was unable to avert.

He acknowledges that the disorder of public affairs increased every day; that credit continued to sink; and that, without a speedy remedy, the government would be reduced to the greatest extremities. He owns likewise, that foreign affairs are in no better posture. "Every thing," he says, "that is done or proposed by lord Townshend is disliked, right or wrong; so it is no wonder if the king of France takes heart, and if England be discouraged to a very great degree.

"This sort of conduct in the foreign affairs, being so directly contrary to all the measures hitherto taken, contributes no less to the sinking our credit, than the long-continued assurances of a speedy dissolution; so that, upon the whole, it will be no great surprise to you to hear, in some very short time, that I am no longer in a capacity of doing you any farther service; but as long as I can be of the least use to you, I am willing to bear the greatest uneasiness of all kinds."

Undeceived in the hopes, which he had at first placed in Shrewsbury's mediation, the treasurer was at length convinced that a resolution was taken to dissolve the parliament; and he was strengthened in his conviction, by the opinion of the general. He acted, therefore, with more dignified firmness than he had usually shewn, remonstrated with the queen against a measure which would be the ruin and destruction of England, and announced his resolution to retire, before such a design was

publicly declared. He flattered himself, that the whigs would imitate his example, and that if such a resolution could not save the parliament, it would, at least, operate on the public mind, and produce a favourable result. This hope he expresses to his correspondent.

"*July* 24. * * * * I shall only say, upon the whole, that by my best observations and intelligence, the madness continues as fierce as ever against the parliament; and most people that I talk with, think that extremity is now very near. Whenever it does come, I am of opinion it must necessarily oblige me, lord president, lord chancellor, &c. to shew our dislike of it in the most public manner; but I think, at the same time, your station is so different from ours, that our behaviour upon that occasion ought not to have any influence upon you, and that nothing will justify your not acting as you have done, but some personal affront to lady Marlborough, which would be an indignity too particular for you to bear. And if you should have a thought of following the example, which I and my other friends are at present most inclined to, in case of extremity against the parliament, that step alone would presently be taken, as a handle for resentment against lady Marlborough."

"*July* 31. O. S. — I received yesterday the favour of yours of the 2d of August, by the courier from the emperor, to which I make haste to answer, by the way of Ostend. You may depend that the queen, being by Mrs. Masham entirely in the hands of Mr. Harley and the dukes of Somerset and Shrewsbury, has not the least regard for me, any

farther than I am necessary in order to bring their ends to bear. This situation is not like to continue longer than till the extremity comes against the parliament, which seems still to me to be thoroughly intended, notwithstanding all the difficulties in it at home, and all the consequences of it abroad, which have been shewn and represented as fully as is possible. But the queen seems to be deaf to all reasonings of that nature, and is persuaded to look upon it only as a personal contest for power and favour, and whether the whigs or tories shall have the greatest sway; and though it may make a little shock at present, yet all that will be set right, and recovered again by the new parliament, which will be entirely at the queen's disposal, and have nothing so much at heart, as to deliver her from the tyranny of the whigs and their supporters. This is the language and the scheme. When it comes to be executed, the lord chancellor, lord president, the duke of Devonshire, and myself, seem resolved to retire, as what may most effectually contribute to a good parliament.

"Now, as to you, I think your conduct must be quite the contrary. You must still represent the mischief of this measure, and the ill consequences of it with the allies, and most particularly with the States, and the emperor, &c.; but, at the same time, continue to give assurances of your best and most faithful services.

"Now, in case a good parliament ensue, of which I have pretty good hopes, this will leave it open for you, at winter, to give what turn you please to almost every thing; especially if upon

this view, you are able, as you seem to think, to keep the States, and the emperor, from desponding, and to preserve them in right measures till they see what the disposition and intention of the succeeding parliament will be, and whether it will not be more inclined to be influenced by you, than by all the rest of the world together, which, since war is to continue, I am verily persuaded is most likely to happen. This is my firm opinion, though I am not naturally more sanguine than other people. But the new scheme on this point is, as I conjecture, to prepare the elector of Hanover for an offer from the queen of your post, in another year; and this they reckon will have two advantages; one, to deliver them from your great power, of which they give the queen all possible apprehension, in the least disputable manner; the other, to take from themselves the imputation, which is not unnatural, of their being inclined to the king of France's pupil.* Now, if this scheme of theirs can be made practicable, which, I think, is extremely difficult, I think the elector or the queen will be duped in it; and of the two, I doubt it is more likely to fall upon the latter. What effect advances of this kind are likely to have on the elector, I am not able to guess; but am pretty clear that the States will never be prevailed with to enter into this scheme."

These indications of dignified firmness, however vague, were not unknown to Harley, and he began to be apprehensive lest the resignation of

* The pretender.

the treasurer and the whigs, at the same time, might be followed by that of the general, which might have spread too much alarm in the public mind, and frustrated the grand scheme, for effecting a complete change in the administration. The queen, therefore, was persuaded to suspend her intention of dissolving the parliament, to remove the treasurer before a general resignation could take place, and to do it in such a manner, as would induce the whigs to remain in power; well knowing that their concurrent advice would prevail on the duke of Marlborough not to relinquish his command.

CHAPTER 94.

1710.

Successful attempts of the queen and Harley to disunite the whigs. — Dismission of Godolphin. — His patriotic conduct. — Appointment of the new treasury board. — Harley chancellor of the exchequer. — Chagrin and vexation of Marlborough. — He still retains the command, at the importunities of his friends. — Correspondence. — Impolitic forbearance of the whigs. — Their resignation or removal. — Formation of the new tory ministry. — Fatal effects of these changes on the permanent welfare of England. — Marlborough shackled and dispirited in his military operations. — Letters expressive of his feelings and apprehensions.

The different attacks against the whigs, Marlborough, and Godolphin, had been gradually and discreetly prepared, skilfully timed, and brought forward in such a progressive manner, as was calculated to try the strength of those to whom the government was confided, and at the same time to increase their divisions.

The result was fully answerable to the views of those artful politicians, by whom this change was effected. The duke of Marlborough had been brought to bear successive mortifications, each increasing in degree, and to feel how little he could rely on the lukewarm support of the whigs. On

the other hand, the whigs, equally jealous of the two ministers, had been lured by the most refined address; and to soothe their fears for the loss of their own power, each successive change had been represented, as a mere temporary measure, to gratify the feelings of the queen, and by no means intended to affect those principles, of which they were the champions.

These arts baffled the penetration of those great statesmen, who had a deeper knowledge of policy than of cabinet intrigues, or of human nature. They continued suspecting, yet confiding; listened to the overtures of Shrewsbury, as the organ of court favour; suffered themselves to be amused by his professions, and still deceived themselves in the hope, that his interest would be employed for the preservation of the parliament, and, consequently, of their own power.

As the integrity of Godolphin was yet unimpeached, and as his financial talents were generally appreciated, a singular infatuation prevailed among his partisans, and was even entertained by Marlborough himself, that no attempt would be made against him, till the parliament had been dissolved, and another secured, more friendly to the tory interest. They thus lulled themselves into security, at the very moment when the mine was sprung which involved them in one common disgrace.

The secret counsellors of the queen availed themselves of some peevish expressions, which the conduct of Shrewsbury extorted from the treasurer at a cabinet council, and in the presence of the sovereign. In an altercation, which was, perhaps, purposely excited, he appears to have been provoked beyond

his usual caution, and to have upbraided Shrewsbury with signalising his admission to power by french counsels. The queen interfering, the minister probably hazarded some of those bold truths, which, however justified by circumstances, could not fail to prove grating in the royal ear, at the time when the aversion entertained against the Marlborough family recoiled on himself. The queen, however, did not appear to preserve any resentment for what had passed, though she treated him with studied coldness and reserve. Still, however, neither he nor any of his friends deemed his fall so near; and their whole attention appears to have been employed, in the attempt to prevent the dissolution of parliament.

On the 7th, Godolphin had a long audience of the queen, in which he made many communications, recently received from the army. Among the rest, he adverted to a plot to poison her majesty, which had been discovered to the duke of Marlborough, by some princess at the french court. He likewise imparted a design, which had long been in agitation, for a descent on the coast of Picardy. These communications the queen received not only without any appearance of dissatisfaction, but with marks of approbation. The conclusion of the letter, in which Godolphin gave the account of this audience, indicates, however, some species of opposition to the military plans of the general, which he could not venture to explain. "I think," he observes, "the safety or destruction of the parliament remains still under a good deal of uncertainty; and though that un-

certainty occasions a great deal of mischief, yet I don't see the least inclination to relieve us from those ill consequences; though, at the same time, the queen seems to be convinced there is no safety but in the good success of the war; yet, as often as the necessary measures for compassing that end are proposed, *there is a lion in the way.*" *

From the queen's coldness, from the secret opposition to which he here adverts, and from other causes, the treasurer seems to have suspected her intention to dismiss him; for the same day he had another audience of two hours, in which he took the resolution of representing the mischievous consequences of secret counsels, and her want of confidence in her ostensible ministers. He concluded with submitting to her decision, whether he should continue in office, offering to serve or not, as she should deem it for her interest, concluding with the categorical question, "Is it the will of your majesty that I should go on?" The queen replied without hesitation, "Yes!" †

With this answer the minister was satisfied, and quitted her presence, though he observed, in her looks and manner, unusual symptoms of embarrassment and gloom. He was, therefore, equally surprised and confounded, when, the next morning, a servant in the royal livery left a note with his porter, dated on the evening after the audience.

"*Kensington, Aug.* 7. — The uneasiness which

* Letter from Godolphin, Aug. 7.

† Letter from Godolphin, Aug. 7, and a narrative of the duchess, which seems to be taken from this letter, or from other communications of the treasurer.

you have shewed for some time, has given me very much trouble, though I have borne it; and had your behaviour continued the same it was for a few years after my coming to the crown, I could have no dispute with myself what to do. But the many unkind returns I have received since, especially what you said to me personally before the lords, makes it impossible for me to continue you any longer in my service; but I will give you a pension of four thousand a year, and I desire, that instead of bringing the staff to me, you will break it, which, I believe, will be easier to us both."

On the ensuing morning, the queen briefly announced to the duke of Marlborough the removal of his friend.

"*Kensington, Aug.* 8.—My lord treasurer having for some time shewed a great deal of uneasiness in my service, and his behaviour not being the same to me as it was formerly, made it impossible for me to let him keep the white staff any longer: and, therefore, I ordered him this morning to break it, which I acquaint you with now, that you may receive this news first from me; and I do assure you, I will take care that the army shall want for nothing."

On the same day, the ex-minister himself announced his unexpected disgrace.

"*Tuesday, Aug.* 8.—I wrote to you yesterday by the way of Ostend, and though I had not the least notice then of what has since happened, I believe it will be no great surprise to you, after the steps made here of late, to hear the queen has, this morning, been pleased to dismiss me from her ser-

vice. I shall send you a copy of the letter I had the honour to receive from her majesty, upon that occasion, with my answer to it. How the treasury is to be filled, I am not yet able to give any account; but I imagine it will be at first by a commission. What I am chiefly concerned for just now is, that you should take this matter in the manner that is most adviseable for yourself and all the world besides.

" It is my opinion, that you should represent to the queen, that it is impossible for any body to imagine but you must be affected by this stroke in the most sensible manner, and to such a degree as will hardly leave you that heart and spirit which is necessary to carry on her majesty's service for the future, with that success which you have hitherto had the good fortune to do; and that therefore you hope she will have the goodness to give you leave to return to England as soon as you find yourself incapable of being of any farther use to her service there; but by no means to think of leaving your post, till you have had an answer from the queen to this letter, from which you will be best able to judge what step you are next to take.

" In the mean time, a council being summoned to meet to-morrow morning at twelve, there is a great variety of conjectures stirring, whether it is to dissolve the parliament, or declare its continuance by proclamation. By a nomination which I have just now heard, of a new commission of the treasury, I should rather guess the latter, for it is such a one as will utterly disgust the tories."

" *Aug.* 9.—Though my circumstances at pre-

sent are a little discouraging; yet nothing can ever make me neglect doing what is best for the whole, or thinking of every thing that may be most for your honour and safety. I do, therefore, now, and resolve to continue to take the same pains and care I did before, that you may be effectually supported to the end of this campaign, in the post where you are, in hopes this may enable you the better to persuade the States and the emperor not to break quite loose from the queen and England, but to expect, as patiently as they can, the opening of the session, or a new parliament. I continue still very much of the opinion, that either of them will be entirely for supporting the alliance, consequently, will be wholly guided by you, as soon as you return to England. If any other method than this should be taken, the grand alliance must be dissolved, and England fall into immediate distraction and confusion.

" This, then, I lay down as the most probable method, to save the whole from destruction, with most honour and advantage to yourself. I hope, therefore, you will govern yourself accordingly, and I pray God to continue the same success to you that you have hitherto had.

" Whatever you shall find necessary to represent to the queen, relating either to the subsistence of your troops, or to any thing else, which you wish may be furnished from hence, for your project, you may continue to write to me, and I will put as much of it as is proper into the hands of Mr. Secretary Boyle to shew to the queen, or you may write directly to him, if that be easier to

you; for his part has been very good to you and me, and I have reason to think will continue so.

" I have spoken particularly to Mr. Vryberg, to the minister of the duke of Savoy, and, to-morrow, I shall do so to count Gallas, desiring them all not to despond, and endeavouring to convince them, that 'tis the true interest of the allies to keep together, and expect the event of the parliament. The two former have seemed to me to be convinced themselves that this is right, but to fear they may find some difficulty of satisfying their principals in it.

" Mr. Boyle has told me to-day, that lord Rivers is to go to Hanover, with compliments from the queen, but not to make any stay. I imagine the chief errand is, to propose to the elector the coming into your post another year; but I reckon Mr. Harley will give out it is for the invitation, and that the queen is very desirous England should have full satisfaction in that matter. It is certain that England is now bent upon this more than ever, and with a little more reason; but if it be true that the queen acquiesces in it, you will allow me that it is no small instance of Mr. Harley's power."

We cannot but admire the patriotic and disinterested sentiments which the ex-minister exhibited; yet we must regret that his timid and cautious advice, almost in every instance, palsied the spirit of his friend, and in this instance more than all. We must, at the same time, bear testimony to his incorruptible and honourable administration, which, while it economised the public money, left him only a scanty pittance of private

property inadequate to the support of his station and dignity.* Indeed, had he not at this time succeeded to the fortune of his elder brother, Sir William Godolphin, this venerable statesman, who had so many years managed the treasury of England, would have been reduced to depend for support on the beneficence of his friend, the duke of Marlborough. Nor can we sufficiently testify our concern, that the queen should have been so much misled, or so unmindful of his past services, as to neglect the payment of the promised pension, which he was too dignified to demand.†

The disgrace of Godolphin was speedily followed by the dismission of his son, lord Rialton, from the office of cofferer of the household.

The whole party of the whigs were panic-struck with the removal of Godolphin, who they soon found had been the only barrier that shielded them from the machinations of the tories, and the antipathy of the queen. They held a meeting on the evening of his dismission, at Mr. secretary Boyle's, to concert a plan of conduct; but, fondly persuading themselves that the new counsellors could not carry on the administration, for want of public credit and confidence, the only decision they

* In his correspondence with the duchess, Mr. Maynwaring hints at he narrow circumstances of lord Godolphin. "I can easily believe your grace has a sad story to tell upon the subject of lord Godolphin's money matters, who will not be able to keep his family unless the duke of Marlborough assists him, which I really think he should do." The duchess also states, that before he obtained an accession of fortune by the death of his brother, his estate, exclusive of what was settled on his son, did not exceed 1000l. a year.

† From a memorandum in the hand-writing of the duchess, endorsed on the queen's letter to the treasurer. See Chapter 113.

adopted was, that of keeping aloof, till their opponents had fallen victims to their own weakness and inability. The successful party, however, judged more correctly, and hastened to mature their measures, and ensure their victory. The treasury was immediately put in commission, at the head of which was lord Poulett; but the real powers of the government were vested in Mr. Harley, who, the next day, supplanted Mr. Smith in the chancellorship of the exchequer.

Marlborough was deeply affected by the disgrace of his long-tried friend and able coadjutor, not only from personal affection, but from the detriment which he apprehended to the public service, by the loss of his financial abilities. For the first time in the course of his long and successful career, he felt that he stood alone, the mark of political enmity, envy, and faction; and that he had lost the coadjutor to whom he could impart his cares and difficulties, and in whose advice and faithful intelligence he could confidently rely.

We are naturally anxious, therefore, to trace his feelings and behaviour at this interesting period; but our curiosity is not fully gratified, because only a few of his letters have been preserved. They exhibit the mingled sentiments of indignation and spleen, resignation and despondency: while his principal care appears to have been directed to resume his confidential intercourse with the elector of Hanover, to preserve the integrity of the grand alliance, to prosecute his military operations with his usual vigour, and to keep up the spirit of his friends in England.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*August* 28.—The surprising news which I received by the last post, of the treasury's being put into commission, has occasioned in me very melancholy thoughts. I wish I may be mistaken, and that there may be credit found for the support of the army; otherwise, France will, without a battle, get the better of the allies. Whatever happens, whilst I have life, I shall be faithfully yours. I have taken my resolution of troubling my head as little as is possible with politics, but apply my thoughts wholly how to finish this campaign, to the best advantage, and then shall be impatient of being with you. No doubt but lady Marlborough gave you an account of lord Somers's letter. I have sent my answer open, so that she may acquaint you with the contents."

"*Aug.* 30.—It is impossible for me to express the very uneasy and extravagant thoughts I have had since the news of your being out. The french will certainly be so heartened by our unaccountable proceedings in England, that whatever their difficulties may be, they will not think of peace, whilst they have hopes of our running into confusion.

* * * * * * *

"Prince Eugene is so desirous of doing good, that whatever I should think for my service, he would undertake, even to the making of a journey to England. If you think any good use may be made of his kind offer, let me know your thoughts by Collins, this bearer, as well as every thing else you may judge proper for me to know; for till I

see you, I believe you will not have many more opportunities of writing safely. I have again this day received advice and assurances from the elector of Hanover, of his steady resolution of being my friend.

* * * * * * *

" I have opened my letter to acknowledge the favour of your two letters by Ostend, of the 7th and 11th. I will, to the utmost of my power, follow your directions, and have this afternoon writ to the elector of Hanover. The whole proceedings at this time in England are so extravagant, that one would think they have no other view, but bringing every thing to distraction. When you can write with safety, let me hear from you; but, from henceforward, by the ordinary post, I shall not write any thing but what I shall expect Mr. Harley will see. The behaviour of the duke of Shrewsbury is very unaccountable; for I do not see, in this scheme, that the tories can be pleased no more than the whigs. I hope and beg you will think so well of me, that after this campaign we may yet, for some few years, live in more quietness than these new vipers would have us."

" *Sept.* 4. * * * The Amsterdam gazette has acquainted the world with lord Rivers's errand to Hanover. I own I wish the thing might be made practicable; since it is what might reasonably free me from the incumbrance I now lie under. Besides, I have of late received so many civilities from the elector of Hanover, that I should be glad to use my best endeavours to make it easy to him; but I think the dutch and prince Eugene would never

be brought to agree to it, though the queen should declare never so much in favour of it. My resolution is to be careful of behaving myself so in this matter, that the elector may take it kindly of me. I am here lodged at the abbey of St. Andrew, very much to my liking; but it is so near the town, that I fear the noise of the cannon and small shot, when the attack begins, will be troublesome. We shall send to-morrow some troops to invest St. Venant, which will be first attacked; for our being masters of that place will very much help us in the reducing of this. The certainty of a new parliament makes every body that has any interest, desirous of going for England: if I refuse, they will take it unkindly; and if they go, I shall lose the service of a great many. Those that go only to England, I may expect some of them back; but for those that are obliged to go for Scotland, they can't return."

The letters to the duchess breathe the same political sentiments, softened by feelings of affection towards her. Amidst this revolution of parties, he was conscious that she had yet farther mortifications to undergo from the queen's resentment; and he endeavours to soothe her irritation, to restrain her conduct within the bounds of respect and caution, and to prepare her mind for her impending disgrace.

"*Aug.* 18. * * * * My intelligence is very positive, that there will be a new parliament, and that you must not flatter yourself, but expect every thing that can be disagreeable personally to yourself; for there is no barbarity but what you and I must expect."

"*Aug.* 25.—By your last letters, I believe this will find you at lady Bridgewater's. To her and her lord, I desire you will make my kindest compliments. What you write in one of your letters, of assisting Mr. Lomax at St. Alban's, as things are now, I believe there will be no real opposition to the same members that served them in the last parliament; and, really, as violences run, I would beg of you not to be at St. Alban's, neither before, nor at the election, fearing you might meet with some insult, which would be a mortification to me. What I hear from England gives me infinite trouble, there being no mischief but what may be expected. I have given your letter to lieut.-general Wythers, and by the commission he tells me you have charged him, I should think you do not think things in so bad a condition as I do. I fear you are amused, and not told the truth; for, believe it, the queen will risk England rather than not vex you. She has at this time no resentment but to you, me, lord treasurer, and our children. God knows how little I have deserved this, and his will be done. You shall ever find me with much tenderness, yours."

"*Aug.* 28.—I have received yours of the 8th, by Holland. That, as well as the rest of my letters, acquaints me with the surprising news of lord treasurer's being out. I must confess it was what I did not expect; but by my former letters, you might see that I was sufficiently prepared for mortifications. I send my answer to lord Somers's letter open, that you may see what answer I make. From henceforward, I would beg of you not to

write any thing, but what you would not care if it were seen, unless you should have a safe hand of writing.

"I intend to send Collins with the news of Bethune, and will order him not to return till he has a letter from you. I shall write by him; so that you will know when he is at London, for I believe you will now desire, till my return, of being at Woodstock, or with your children. We have yet two months before this campaign can be ended, after which, I shall lose no time in sending to you; for I will not stay but a very few days at the Hague. Our sickness continues; but I thank God I have my health, and will take the best care I can to keep it. My poor coachman, that has lived so long with me, died of this fever yesterday; and poor Daniel, my favourite cook, is not yet recovered; but they hope he will. I am, tenderly, yours."

"*Aug.* 30. — I acquainted you in some of my former letters, that the project most likely to be agreed upon was, that lord Godolphin, you, and I, were to be dropped, as is pretty plain now, by the discarding of him, and that the whole will be put in execution as soon as the conjuncture can allow of it. I beg of you to keep out of the way; for nothing would please more those who wish us ill, than to have a pretext for the removing of you, which would to me be a much greater mortification than any other personal thing to myself. As I receive mortifications, and a harsh return from my own country, if I were capable of receiving pleasure, it would be one to see the kind concern all

the foreigners shew me on this occasion; but my apprehensions are, that the heats of faction are grown so very great, that we can't avoid, sooner or later, fatal disturbances in England, by which the nation may be ruined, and France reap the advantage. I have this day received fresh assurances from the elector, and to-morrow I shall write to him in such a manner as he may be assured of my being very sensible of his kindness expressed at this time. Pray take the best measures you can with Mr. Vanbrugh, that all the work possible may be done this summer at Blenheim.

* * * * *

"This being the only safe opportunity I am like to have for some time, I must earnestly desire you not to be amused, but to be thoroughly convinced, that a steady resolution is taken to do all the mischief possible to you and me, and all that belong to us.

"I have opened my letter to thank you for yours of the 7th and 11th, by Ostend, and by them see they are endeavouring to put in practice what I was informed concerning us. I have followed my friends' advice, by writing this afternoon a letter to the elector of Hanover. I am vexed, but be assured that I shall not do my health any prejudice; for whilst you are kind, and some few friends just, I shall contemn the barbarous usage I meet with."

From the preceding narrative it will fully appear that the dismission of Godolphin and the dissolution of parliament had long been the objects of the queen and her secret cabinet, and that nothing could have frustrated their designs but that union

and decision in which the heterogeneous ministry were so lamentably deficient. It is, therefore, a matter of surprise, that the dismission of Godolphin, to use the expression of lord Sunderland, "should have stunned the whigs," and that they should still be so infatuated as to suppose that they could preserve the parliament, or at least maintain their ascendancy in the new elections. In fact, although there was not the smallest room to doubt or deliberate, we still find them acting the same indecisive part, pressing the general to retain his command, in hopes that his successes would awe the queen, and cherishing the futile prospect of future retaliation.

These motives and opinions are detailed in a letter from their organ, lord Sunderland.

"My lord; *August* 24.

"I have the honour of yours of the 30th, by Collins, and do heartily congratulate the taking of Bethune, and hope in God you will have the remaining part of the campaign attended with your usual good success; though it is a grievous thing to think of the usage you meet with, at the same time that you are doing what you are abroad, with success. This proceeding is certainly without example, and you may depend upon it, that the whigs, to a man, have a right sense of it, and upon all occasions will act in whatever manner you shall think right. And, I am sure, if you, lord Godolphin, and the whigs, do act cordially and vigorously together, without suspicion of one another, which I am sure there is no reason for, it is impossible but every thing must come right again; especially since the elector of Hanover

is so right as he is, as appears both from what you know, as well as from letters I have seen from thence myself. For that affair of Hanover is, and must be our sheet anchor, and if it be rightly managed, you will be effectually revenged of all your enemies; and that by securing your country, the only sure way, and you will be, if possible, a greater man than you have ever been yet; and you, and your friends, lord Godolphin, and the whigs, must carry your point. This is the unanimous opinion of lord Somers, lord Halifax, lord Orford, the duke of Devonshire, and of all their friends; and there is nothing in which they can assist you, in this or any thing else, that is for the common interest, and for supporting you yourself, that they won't do, with the utmost zeal, either in or out of parliament; and this they have given me commission to assure you of, and I will be guarantee for the performance. I will answer for the like behaviour in lord Wharton, when he returns from Ireland, and I don't much doubt the duke of Newcastle, though a place of £3000 a year is a temptation to his inclinations. I should not have omitted the lord chancellor, who, though he is now in the country, is in every respect as you can wish him.

"By all the accounts we have as yet from the country, there is no reason to apprehend, but we shall have a good parliament, and if so, and that our allies will but have patience (as I don't doubt by your influence they will), all these matters will be soon set right again. The good news from Spain will go a good way towards that.

"In Scotland the elections of the commons are like to go very well, their church being much alarmed; but that of their peers will be bad. However, it will be of great service if the lords and commons of that country, that are in the army, can be spared, and have leave to come over without loss of time; and, in the mean time, write to their friends, which I hear lord Stair has done very warmly and very heartily.

"I have nothing more to trouble you with, but that, in the conclusion, all things may turn to your satisfaction; for the present madness cannot last.

"I send you one of the queen's, in case you have not seen it before. I hear 225* is terribly mortified at it, but he will be pelted a good deal more before it is over."

We cannot omit a characteristic letter written at the same time by lord Halifax, which strikingly evinces the struggle in his mind, between shame for his recent duplicity, and regret at being made the tool of the party by whom he was duped.

"My lord; *August 25.*

"As your grace orders it, one is able to keep up a frequent correspondence, in writing to you upon every victory. I congratulate you, from the bottom of my heart, on your continued success, in the midst of the mortifications that are put upon you daily. This last of my lord treasurer afflicts me beyond measure. I took great pains and went great lengths to prevent it, but found at last that was the only obstacle to an accommodation, that might not have been overcome. I thought nothing else worth con-

* Probably the duke of Somerset.

tending for without it. I own myself highly obliged by my lord Godolphin, and I will say to your grace, that if all passages were fully known, you would think the part I acted towards him more grateful and more kind than are usual amongst us; but as there is generosity in acting such a part, there is good-breeding and good manners, in not explaining particulars that have not been successful. I am mightily pleased to find by your letter, that you are so favourably disposed to accept of my friendship and service. You may depend upon more than I will profess, if you think me worthy of that character. I give you a thousand thanks for the advance you have given Mr. Burton; 'tis a very sensible obligation to me."

It was now, indeed, that the great whig leaders became sensible of their impolicy, in forming a separate interest from that of Marlborough and Godolphin, and in listening to the insidious overtures and plausible promises of Harley and Shrewsbury. They now felt a conscious shame for not having supported the spirited resolution of Marlborough to retire, unless Mrs. Masham was dismissed, and for tamely submitting to the disgrace of Sunderland, who, from his connection, was selected as a victim, to mortify them and the general at the same time. Still more did they deem themselves to blame, for their petty jealousy of Godolphin, and the selfishness with which they suffered him to be sacrificed. Convinced, too late, of their past impolicy, and satisfied that their whole support depended on acting cordially with Marlborough,

we find them professing their attachment to his person, and their determination to share his fate.

Amidst these alarming prognostics, they still, however, lingered on the threshold of power, with the hopes of excluding any more tories from the offices of government, as well as of preserving the parliament; and almost a month elapsed, before we trace among them any indication of spirit. Harley continued to avail himself of this indecisive and wavering conduct, and pursued his artful policy. He prevented the resignation of the duke of Newcastle, by promising him the place of chief justice in eyre of the royal forests beyond Trent; and though the co-operation of Halifax could not be secured, he neutralised him, by suffering several of his friends to remain in office.* He likewise employed the influence of the queen, to retain the duke of Somerset in his post of master of the horse. He even affected to be jealous of the preponderance of the tories, evinced an anxiety to place St. John and Harcourt in subordinate offices, and, as if with a view to form a moderate administration, made the most pressing and repeated overtures to several of the whigs. Of these, he particularly addressed himself to the lord chancellor, lord Mohun, and Mr. Walpole. In making these overtures, he artfully insinuated that a whig game was intended, and that his great object was to preserve the protestant succession; but his arts were ineffectual, and they all three honourably resisted his offers and promises. His overtures being repelled, he soon

* Cunningham, vol. ii.

found that his plan of a motley administration was impracticable. He therefore changed his deportment, and hastened to free himself from those, whom he could neither gain nor conciliate, and whose places were coveted by his own partisans.

At his instigation, the queen withdrew from Somers her confidential attentions, and treated him with coldness and reserve. The great leader of the whigs being disgusted by these mortifications, declared his resolution of withdrawing from office, and his example was followed by his colleagues and adherents. On the 19th he resigned, with the duke of Devonshire, and Mr. Boyle. His place was transferred to the earl of Rochester; the duke of Buckingham was nominated lord steward; and the seals of secretary of state were conferred on Mr. St. John. The post of governor of Ireland was given to the duke of Ormond, on the resignation of lord Wharton, and lord Orford prudently threw up his situation at the board of admiralty, though strongly exhorted by the whigs and Godolphin to remain in office. The presidency of the board was vested in Sir John Leake, Sir George Byng retaining his place; the new members were, Aislabie, Sir William Drake, Wishart, and Clarke.

Lord chancellor Cowper resigned, notwithstanding the earnest solicitations of Harley, and the repeated commands of the queen, who replaced the seals three times in his hands, when he offered them.* The great seal was put in commission, the members being Sir Thomas Trevor, and barons Tracy and Scroope. Sir Simon Harcourt was made

* Lord Cowper's Diary—Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, ch. v.

attorney-general; soon after, lord keeper; and finally, chancellor. As a peculiar mortification to the duke of Marlborough, and notwithstanding his earnest solicitations with the queen, Cardonel was removed from the office of secretary at war, and his place filled by Mr. Granville, afterwards lord Lansdowne.

Since the accession of William no change of ministry had ever been carried to such an extent; for before the close of the year, not a single whig, with the exception of the dukes of Newcastle and Somerset, retained any office of importance. Thus ended the most glorious administration, which had ever directed the affairs of the country since the reign of Elizabeth. However we may lament the want of harmony and consistency, which reigned among the members of this great and illustrious body; yet their defects, which were merely personal, and inherent in human nature, are lost in the consideration of their public merits, and heighten, instead of abating, our regret at their fall.

Had these changes, as is usual in the quarrels of party, only affected men, not measures; the reign of Anne, not those of her successors; private, not public interests; we might have considered them as of merely temporary concern. Respecting parties and factions, in so distant a period, we should not have experienced any anxiety, whether the whigs or tories gained the ascendancy; whether Godolphin or Harley presided at the treasury; whether Sunderland and Boyle, or Dartmouth and Sir John, held the seals

of secretary of state; or whether the duchess of Marlborough or Mrs. Masham was mistress of the robes. But as these changes had the most baneful influence on the operations of the war, as they retarded the conclusion of peace, repressed the energy, and shackled the exertions of the great commander, and dissolved a system of policy, seldom paralleled in grandeur and effect; we cannot but lament, that the petty squabbles of the bed-chamber, the jealousies in the ministry, and the interested ambition of secret counsellors, should have concurred with the antipathies of the queen, in producing that inauspicious change, which so deeply injured the welfare of England and Europe, and of which we still feel and deplore the fatal effects.

The military operations were no longer under the control of the general; every proposal was to be submitted to the secret council; he was often thwarted in his grand designs; and he could not venture to carry into execution, those bold projects which might have at once terminated the war, from apprehensions, lest he should be exposed to the malice of his political enemies, if he should fail of success.

A melancholy instance of the mischievous consequences derived from the new measures was, his reluctance to engage in an enterprise against Calais or Boulogne, which was strongly recommended by Godolphin, as the means of raising the drooping spirits of the whigs, and preventing, by so splendid an achievement, the dissolution of par-

liament. * A few extracts from his letters will be sufficient to prove this fatal truth, and to exhibit the strong feelings of a mind, discouraged by detraction, and depressed by a dread of malicious hostility.

"*August* 2. * * * * You may be assured that the king of France is so encouraged by what passes in England, that he has taken a positive resolution for the continuation of the war, and reckons upon my not being employed this next campaign. The little consideration that the queen has for you and me, makes it not safe for me to make any proposal, for the employing those regiments now in the Isle of Wight; though, if things were as formerly, I could attempt a project on the sea-coast, that might prove advantageous. But as every thing is now, I dare attempt nothing, but what I am almost sure must succeed; nor am I sure that those now in power would keep my secret."

"*August* 4. * * * * I find by Mr. Secretary's letter, that the expedition to the West Indies is not to proceed. I have made no proposition how those regiments might be employed; for as the disputes and disorders you have in England, make me more cautious than heretofore; so if I should undertake the project for Boulogne or Calais, England must be at the expence of ammunition and meal, which your letters that speak so dismally of the credit, make me afraid of making any proposal. Besides, I now feel, though I mean never so well, should I not have success, I

* Letter from lord Godolphin, July 29.—Aug. 9.

should find but too many ready to blame me; so that if I am more cautious than heretofore, I hope the queen will approve of it, when, at the same time, I promise that no opportunity that the enemy may give, shall be neglected. But I must have a care of myself, to be the better able to serve her hereafter."

"*August* 11. — I am of opinion, that after the siege of Aire, I shall have it in my power to attack Calais. In that case, many things must be furnished by the fleet from England, and then, the more troops you could spare from England, the better. This is a conquest that would very much prejudice France, and ought to have a good effect for the queen's service in England; but I see so much malice levelled at me, that I am afraid it is not safe for me to make any proposition; fearing, if it should not succeed, my enemies might turn it to my disadvantage."

Indeed, we have not only the authority of the duke and Godolphin, but the acknowledgment even of the enemy, in regard to the mischiefs derived from this fatal change. The king of France saw with pleasure the machinations which were passing in England, and anticipated the fall of that ministry, and the dissolution of that parliament, whose exertions had driven him to the brink of ruin. Even in the midst of the transactions at Gertruydenberg, he made clandestine overtures to the secret advisers of the queen, with the hope of establishing that separate negotiation with England, in which he was afterwards successful. We likewise find Torcy himself triumphantly declaring,

" What we lose in Flanders, we shall gain in England." Encouraged by this hope, Louis secretly ordered Villars to act on the defensive; and notwithstanding the distresses of his subjects, and his financial embarrassments, protracted the war, under the conviction, that the queen and her new ministry would moderate their demands, and accede to more favourable conditions of peace. We acknowledge with regret that his hopes were soon fulfilled; we feel with concern that England was blindly engaged in contributing to her own dishonour, and in furthering the interests of the enemy.

CHAPTER 95.

1710.

Popular ferment excited by the progress of Sacheverell. — Dissolution of parliament. — Ascendancy of the tories. — Delays in the works at Blenheim. — Plan and estimate of Vanbrugh, the architect of the building. — Difficulties in obtaining money from government for the prosecution of the work. — Correspondence on the subject. — Marlborough courted by the tories. — Suspicions of the whigs and the duchess. — Manly explanation of his conduct.

While the arrangements for the new administration were pending, the triumphant party resorted to one of those expedients which are at once calculated to awaken enthusiasm, and ascertain the popular sentiments. Sacheverell was the political puppet employed on this occasion. His zeal having been rewarded by the presentation to a valuable living in Wales, he made a solemn progress through the country, to take possession. The scheme fully answered its purpose. Multitudes poured forth to hail his progress; the nobility, gentry, clergy, and people, vied in their demonstrations of joy and exultation; cavalcades escorted him from town to town, and from village to village; the roads were lined, the hedges covered with spectators; steeples were illuminated, and sumptuous

feasts prepared in every quarter for the triumphant guest. In fact, never was a victorious commander, a distinguished patriot, or a beloved sovereign, welcomed with more general or enthusiastic tokens of applause, than this miserable tool of faction.

Encouraged by this ebullition of public feeling, the ministry anticipated the satisfactory result of a new election. Accordingly, a royal proclamation, on the 26th of September, announced the dissolution of parliament. A violent struggle ensued between the two parties, which, in zeal and activity, was almost unprecedented; and, on this occasion, we have again to be surprised at the spirit of infatuation which possessed the ex-minister and the whigs. Had Marlborough given credit to the assertions of his principal correspondents, he would have concluded that the whigs would have retained their ascendancy. Godolphin flattered himself with the hopes of this favourable result. Even Somers, cautious as he was, fell into the same error; and Sunderland, with his characteristic ardour, observes to the duke, —

"*Aug.* 11. * * * Mr. Harley and the duke of Shrewsbury are determined to make thorough business of it, and the parliament will be dissolved in a few days; but there is to comfort one, that by all the accounts from the counties, there is like to be a good election, so that the advisers of this dissolution, and the setters-up of the hereditary right, as they call it, may possibly pass their times yet worse, in a new parliament, than they would have done in this."

But Marlborough was undeceived by the more

calculating judgment of Walpole and Craggs, who did not hesitate to declare that the ferment of the nation, in favour of the tories, was so great, as to ensure for them a majority of one-third in the new parliament; and their calculations proved to be well founded. The hopes, therefore, which had been vainly cherished, on the event of this appeal to the feelings of the people, speedily vanished; and while the whigs had another cause to deplore their infatuation and want of foresight, Marlborough felt himself more insulated, and foresaw the still greater persecutions to which he was devoted, now that the only barrier was removed which had hitherto screened him from the malice of his enemies.

In no one instance did he feel more the loss of his friend in the treasury, and that spirit of personal persecution which was industriously excited against him in the new parliament, than in the conduct of the government with regard to the building at Blenheim. This edifice was announced as a monument of national gratitude, worthy of the country by which it was given, and of the services it was intended to commemorate. Some of his friends, particularly the duchess and lord Godolphin, were desirous that it should be built on a moderate scale, and more adapted to comfort than magnificence; but he, considering it as a public work, had approved the plan of Vanbrugh for a magnificent building, which was not to yield in extent or ornament to the proud fabric of Versailles. The design, sanctioned by the queen and cabinet, was ordered to be carried into execution;

and her majesty, as if anxious to anticipate the completion of so splendid a work, directed a model to be placed at the royal palace of Kensington.

Hitherto this structure had proceeded with all the rapidity which the grandeur of the undertaking permitted, and the requisite supplies of money had been regularly issued by the treasury. In the recent contests of party, however, this great national monument had been singled out as the object of invective; and *the golden mine of Blenheim* had been repeatedly mentioned with sarcastic affectation by the tory members of the house of commons. No sooner, therefore, were the ministry changed, and a new board of treasury appointed, than recourse was had to so proper a subject to annoy the feelings of the duke. With a total disregard to the public engagements, they immediately started objections to the expence, and did not disdain to resort to the most contemptible artifices, in order to throw the remainder of the burthen on the great general, whose achievements it was designed to signalise and reward.

With this view, attempts were, underhand, made to induce him to issue his own orders for completing the edifice, and the workmen were encouraged to apply to him for the payment of their wages, which were in arrear in consequence of the suspension of the treasury warrants. Had he incautiously fallen into either of these snares, he would not only have been liable to satisfy all demands, but would have been burthened with the entire expence of finishing the remainder of the work. He therefore refused to issue any orders, or to pay

any arrears, leaving the execution and the management to the commissioners appointed by the treasury, in pursuance of the royal orders and the original warrant.

Failing in their attempt to prevail on the duke, the agents of government applied to the duchess; and we find, on this subject, an artful letter from the architect, representing to her grace, that the works were suspended for want of money, that several persons had already advanced considerable sums for the purpose, and that many more would follow the example, if her grace would write a letter to him or Mr. Travers, declaring that whatever might happen, the workmen should not suffer. The duchess, however, had too much penetration to be deceived by this manœuvre; and she not only refused her consent, but even suspended the progress of the works, and dismissed several of the workmen. * At length, and not without considerable difficulty, the application of the duke extorted from the queen a warrant for so much money as was merely adequate to the expence of covering in those parts of the structure which would have been damaged by an exposure during winter.

Amidst these difficulties, the duke was naturally anxious to ascertain from the architect, the amount of the preceding expenditure, and the sums which would probably be necessary for finishing the remainder. On this subject we find several curious letters from Vanbrugh, one of which, dated June

* In an endorsement by the duchess on this letter of Mr. Vanbrugh, she wrote: "Instead of complying with him, I stopped the works in 1710, until the crown should direct money for it."

11, 1709, specifies the terms of the original contract, and states the expence requisite for the completion. According to this account, the first estimate, for the house and wings, was between £90,000 and £100,000; and the same sum would be required to complete the whole, including gardens, bridges, and other exterior appendages. By another account of June 6, 1710, £134,000 had been already expended, and the whole, when finished, was to cost £250,000; but, by subsequent estimates, we find the whole expenditure raised to £287,000.

Several of the duke's letters, at this period, to the duchess, are filled with instructions on this subject, which is likewise adverted to on many occasions in his subsequent correspondence.

"My opinion is, that you and I should be careful of leaving the disposition of carrying on the building at Woodstock to the queen's officers."

"*Oct. 25 and 27.*—It is our best way not to give any orders, but to let the treasury give what orders they please, either for its going on or standing still. By the inclosed letter, they will lay all the misfortune (of not being covered in before the winter) upon the directions you gave for discharging the workmen. I do earnestly beg that you will tell Mr. Wise to receive his directions from the treasury, and that somebody proper for the building might do the same; for it no way becomes you or me to be giving orders for the queen's money. This is what I desire, and, if I am right, I beg you will be advised by lord Godolphin, which may be the best way of putting it in execution. I also

beg of you to let Mr. Maynwaring know that I beg the favour of him to manage Vanbrugh, so that he may not be angry; for that would be a pleasure to those that wish us ill. Upon the whole we live in a very disagreeable age, in which we must expect no favour."

"*Oct.* 30.—You know my opinion, that neither you, nor I, nor any of our friends, ought to meddle in their accounts, but to let it be taken by the queen's officers, as they always ought to be. She is the mistress of her own money, and consequently, of the time of finishing that house. Whilst lord Godolphin was in, and I had the queen's favour, I was very earnest to have had it finished; but as it is, I am grown very indifferent. For as things are now, I do not see how I can have any pleasure in living in a country where I have so few friends; and, after what has passed, it would be no surprise to me, if I heard that the earl of Abingdon were again lord lieutenant of Oxfordshire."

"*Nov.* 9.—I must say it is a great trouble to me, to find you have so little confidence in my real kindness and esteem for you, as that you could be uneasy at any thing that could pass between such a man as Mr. Vanbrugh and myself. My temper is, to quiet every body if it were possible; and I hope those who have been so officious as to give you an account of this letter, will get you a copy of it, and then you will see that it is impossible to have said less in answer to his letters, full of expressions, and some compliments.

"I have received yours of the 23d, with the copies of your letters concerning the accounts of

the building at Blenheim. What you say in them is very reasonable; but, as we are now, it is no way proper for us to be directing the queen's money, so that I beg of you that they may have their own methods, both as to the accounts past and to come; for I am sure I will give no directions, being very sure, if you or I should, fault would be found."

"*Nov.* 24.—I am glad to see by yours of the 7th, that you have left the business of Blenheim entirely to the queen's officers. I am persuaded that your method is the most reasonable; but, in this conjuncture, we must meddle as little as is possible."

Although in disfavour with his sovereign, overwhelmed with slander and invective, and thwarted in every measure both public and private, the great commander was yet too highly respected abroad to be set aside, like a mere ministerial tool. His services were still deemed necessary, and the new ministry feeling the consequence they could derive from his countenance and support, spared no pains to detach him from the party with which he had been long identified.

Overtures were accordingly made to him by the queen and the principal ministers, and insinuations were thrown out, that if he would coalesce with them, he might regain the royal favour, and be placed in the highest situation to which a subject ought to aspire. But the conditions which they required could not be accepted without the loss of his honour, and a total dereliction of his principles. To use the words of Mr. St. John, "he was to

abandon the whigs, his new friends, and take up with the tories, his old friends; to engage heartily in the true interests, and no longer leave his country a sacrifice to rapine and faction. He was, besides, required to restrain the rage and fury of his wife. These offers were coupled with threats of an impeachment, and boasts that sufficient evidence could be adduced to carry a prosecution through both houses." *

To terms so degrading, and probably conveyed in language no less offensive, he made such a reply as became his character. He declared his resolution to be of no party, to vote according to his conscience, and to be as hearty as his new colleagues in support of the queen's honour, and the welfare of the country. So spirited and independent a reply did not satisfy the ministry; and from this moment they adopted a more decided resolution, to single him out as a victim of hostility and persecution.

Notwithstanding the frank and manly part he had acted in this transaction, the mere fact of his negotiation with the new ministers was sufficient to awaken the jealousy of Godolphin, the duchess, and the whigs. He found it necessary, therefore, to satisfy his friends. In reply to the reproaches of his wife, which he keenly felt, he justified his conduct with equal manliness and candour.

"*Oct.* 4. — Having this safe opportunity of writing by Mr. Craggs's son, I will answer your two letters of the 4th and 7th from the Lodge.

* Letters from Mr. Secretary St. John to Mr. Drummond, *passim*, particularly Dec. 20. 1710. — Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. i. p. 41.

" I find by what Mr. Maynwaring has said or writ to you, you are jealous of my acting so with Mr. Harley or the tories, as that the whigs may have reason to be angry. In the first place, I should not, at this time, have been where I am, if it had not been unanimously desired by all the heads of the whigs. By the same advice, I have made steps to the elector of Hanover, who has entered very kindly into my concerns. The States, the emperor, and the elector, all three have engaged me to continue with the army, which I suppose is, and will be approved by the whigs; for I am resolved of doing nothing but in concert with them. I detest Mr. Harley; but think I have lived long enough in the world to be able to distinguish between reason and faction. I have so good an opinion of lord Godolphin and lord Sunderland, that at my first coming, I will consult every thing with them, and acquaint them with all that has past of late between me, the States, the emperor, and the elector.

" Nothing is more desired by me than to be quiet; my greatest concern is, if possible, to avoid the harsh usage which is most certainly resolved to be put in practice against you, for whom I must ever be more concerned than for all other things in this world. I am most particularly sorry that, at this time, you should have any reason to take any thing ill of Mr. Van., for I dare say he wishes us both very well, and we shall not have it in our power to do him much good. I do agree with you, that in some little time the tories will be desirous to lessen the power and credit of Mr. Harley; but

as long as Mrs. Masham continues, they will find it very difficult. But that is their business, and I think it is much alike who is to do the mischief, when one is sure that every thing must go wrong.

"I do assure you, upon my honour, that I do, with all my heart, wish we may have a peace this winter; though, at the same time, I am very sensible it will give power and strength to Mr. Harley, the queen, and Mrs. Masham, to vex me, and those I wish well to. But if the nation be safe, and I have leave to enjoy my own, I shall envy nobody in power. It is no surprise to me, the duke of Newcastle continuing; but I can't but think when he attends parliament, he will act so as not to please them, for he is a good and honest man.

"Having writ thus far, I have received yours by Ostend, and the copy of Mr. Van.'s letter, which is certainly very offensive; but you have taken a very wise resolution of not making a noise. We are in circumstances that require great temper, by which I hope we may at last overcome our enemies. I think, that those that take care of the building at Blenheim when the winter season and the want of money makes the work to cease, should take care to cover the works, so as what is already done may receive no prejudice, and then it may remain *as a monument of ingratitude*, as Mr. Van. calls it in his letter. I hope the wainscot and every other thing, in your apartment and mine, is finished, so that we may live in that part of the house in the spring.

"We are masters of St. Venant, and I yet hope we shall have Aire by the 20th."

Still, however, the duchess was not satisfied, and appears to have applied to lord Cowper, who was acquainted with his real sentiments and motives. This we learn by a letter to her from lady Cowper.

"*Oct.* 23.—I am very glad my spouse's advice has been of any service to you. I am sure he is never better pleased, than when he can be useful to your grace, or any of your family, and receives the honour of your confidence as he ought to do. He bids me tell you, that as to your fears of lord Marlborough's yielding to the temptations laid before him, he hopes there is no reason to apprehend it; my lord Marlborough having some time since acquainted him with all the particulars of the proceeding, to that time, and withal expressing his detestation of quitting the interests of his country, upon that bottom, or any other temptation whatsoever. He could not but mean, at that time, what he said, because he came hither, in a manner, on purpose, to tell my lord so; and if my lord Marlborough has not been, since that time, so rough as quite to discourage their trying him farther, my lord thinks it is excusable, upon particular reasons, relating to my lord's circumstances, too long to be repeated. But, in the mean time, he is firmly persuaded my lord Marlborough will be very firm and constant. I beg your grace will not mention this.

"Your description of the duchess of Shrewsbury is very good. I have heard much such an account

of her, only with this addition: my lord duke looking a little grave, she chucked him severa times under the chin, bidding him look up, amongst all the company. She is a great honour to a court."

At this juncture, we find a singular letter from the duchess to lord Godolphin, which announces her satisfaction in the conduct of her husband, and evinces no less gratification at being made the agent of his communications with the whigs. It is inserted entire, as one of the few specimens remaining of her epistolary correspondence.

" *St. James's, Tuesday, Oct.* 17.—Since I came to town, I find my pain worse, and I have been advised by that great physician, the duchess of Montagu, to send to Dr. Upton; but 'tis a great secret, and he has advised me to take balm of Gilead twice a day, by which, he says, I shall see in a little time, whether it is any thing that will break.

" I was eased of a great deal of my fears for your illness before I left St. Alban's, Charles made such haste; and I hope I shall hear to-morrow that you are quite well, and if I am so, I will be sure to come to Newmarket, though lord Sunderland is very desirous to have every body in town, and thought, the 14th of this month, that we should yet have a tolerable parliament, which is a wonderful opinion. His lady calls it a cheerful temper, and wishes she had it. Lord Cowper told me he had engaged to come to London, when lord Sunderland summoned; and lord Sunderland writes to me, that he had had a very kind and honest letter. If the queen has persuaded him to do any

thing contrary to right and reason, 'tis more strange than any thing I have heard of yet, and must proceed from the queen's great parts; for 'tis certain he does not intend to leave his old friends, whatever else he has done. Lord Marlborough writes to me that he is very desirous to know the opinion of the whigs, concerning the time of his coming to England; because the elector of Hanover desires it soon, and presses it; but I told him, some time since, that his friends desired the contrary. 'Tis certain that the elector is not the best judge of that matter, and I desire you to give me your opinion of it, and let me know it by Friday's post; for if I were then in a condition to travel, which I have reason to fear I shall not, I must send an answer to this question, and the reasons why lord Marlborough should come, or not come to England; because I believe he would give them to the elector. But he is more than ever, if it be possible, determined to be thoroughly kind to the whigs, with whom you may talk of it, as you have opportunities. I have seen all the letters sent to lord Sunderland. Lord Marlborough's is just such a one as I wished, and every thing relating to the elector mighty well, and several things that will divert you about lord Rivers; but all that concerns the queen monstrous. The elector stopped more than once, when he was going to hurt you, by beginning a panegyric of you; and one thing that pleased me, is, lord Rivers is to have nothing given him.

" My lord Marlborough approves very much of all that I said to Mr. Travers upon the subject of

Woodstock, and, I suppose, will not be less of that mind, when he sees the letters that Mr. Joyns writ, to fright me into sending them money. He adds, that they may pull down what they have built, if they please, he will never contradict it, which I was glad to see; for I think that building was the greatest weakness my lord Marlborough ever had, and, being his passion, I am pleased he has overcome it; and, I believe, these ministers thought to ensnare him by it. Since you writ to me that 'tis said the duke of Somerset lost an election for £40, I must needs tell you a secret vanity, at the same time, very like him, that he gave the nurses at the christening of his daughter's child a hundred guineas, and yet when they lived with him, he would not allow them better than a sea-coal fire.

"Nothing must be ever said, but to very secret friends, of what I write about the elector, lord Rivers, and Mr. Freeman, for reasons I can't give now."

Another letter, from the duke to the duchess, is here introduced, to shew that she continued to be the agent of these communications with the whigs, till the last moment before his departure from the continent.

"*Nov.* 9.—The copy of the letter of 1*, in my judgment, is extreme right, and if I could govern according to my own inclinations, it should be to be entirely quiet, and to meddle with no business. But as the conjuncture of affairs is at present, that is impossible; so that this inclosed to lord Sunder-

* The figure 1 is usually employed to designate lord Cowper.

land will acquaint you with my circumstances on this side of the water, and that I beg of him to lose no time in sending me to the Hague, the opinion of our friends mentioned in my letter; for I would be governed by the whigs, from whose principle and interest I will never depart. Whilst they had a majority in the house of commons, they might suspect it might be my interest, that made me act in conjunction with them; but now they must do me the justice, to see that it is my inclination and principle which makes me act."

In fact, the whigs had soon sufficient reason to be convinced that Marlborough was not tampering with the tories, by the treatment which he experienced at this particular period. As if sufficient mortifications had not already been heaped upon him, we find him subjected to an insult of a peculiar nature, because it affected his power as commander in chief. We give the account in his own words.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*Oct.* 4. * * * Every thing is done to lessen my credit here. By the last post Mr. Secretary wrote, by the queen's order, to acquaint lord Argyle, that his friends have desired leave for him to come for England, and she had allowed of it. This is so very extraordinary a step, that even the duke of Argyle came to me yesterday, to assure me, that he had made no application, and that when he should desire to go for England he should apply to me for my leave. The folly and ingratitude of the queen make me sick and weary of every thing. Though I have it from the same man that gave the intelligence on Scotland,

that to his knowledge, France intends another landing at the time when the elections are to be, I can't believe it. However, to avoid any thing of my side, I have given notice of it, in a private letter to Mr. Secretary, so that the queen and her present ministers may make what use they please of it; for had I writ it in my public letter, I fear it might have hurt the credit. I am entirely yours."

The general had still farther and greater insults to endure in the same capacity, by the sudden dismission of three officers, on whom he had conferred peculiar marks of favour, and who were zealously devoted to his person; these were, major-general Macartney, brigadier-general Honeywood, and, lastly, lieutenant-general Meredith, who was peculiarly obnoxious to the queen, as having been presented by the duke with the regiment which she had intended to bestow on colonel Hill. In a convivial hour these officers toasted the health of their brave commander, and confusion to his enemies; at the same time using some very indiscreet expressions against the new ministers in general, accompanied with contemptuous gestures against Mr. Harley in particular. Without any previous communication to Marlborough, they were immediately cashiered, though with leave to dispose of their commissions to their successors, who were appointed by the queen. Among these we find lord Orrery, against whom the duke had particular objections.

CHAPTER 96.

1710.

Continuation of military operations in the Netherlands.—Sieges and capture of Aire and St. Venant.—Correspondence.—State of the war on the Rhine, in Dauphiné, and in Spain.—Renewed contentions between the duke of Savoy and the emperor.—The duke of Savoy declines to take the field.—Failure of the campaign on the side of the Alps, and of the expedition on the coast of Languedoc.—Campaign in the peninsula.—Inefficient operations of the portuguese.—Successful advance of the allies from Catalonia.—Victories at Almenara and Saragossa, and advance of the confederates to Madrid.—Refusal of the portuguese to form a junction with the forces of Charles.—Patriotism of the castilians, and spirit and firmness of Philip.—Formation of a new army under the command of Vendome.—Irruption of Noailles into Catalonia.—Perilous situation, and retreat of the allies.—Return of Charles to Barcelona.—Capture of general Stanhope and the British troops at Brihuega.—Battle of Villa Viciosa.—Retreat of Staremberg into Catalonia.—Loss of all the austrian conquests except Balaguer, Taragona, and Barcelona.—Marlborough solicits the government of the Netherlands.—His application evaded by Charles.

From the irksome detail of political feuds, party bickerings, and ministeral changes, we revert to a more cheering subject, the military operations till the close of the campaign.

We have already noticed, that after the capture of Bethune, the attention of the confederate generals was directed to the sieges of St. Venant and Aire, the possession of which places would secure the navigation of the Lys, and thus open a water-communication with Tournay, Lille, and Ghent. But we find, at this period, the letters of Godolphin filled with the most pressing importunities that Marlborough would carry into immediate execution the project against Calais or Boulogne. He confidently expressed his opinion, that after masking Aire and St. Venant, the army might advance and surprise Hesdin, and from thence march to the coast: adding, that if marshal Villars ventured to resist, the allies might force him to a general engagement, and, if successful, penetrate to the capital of France.

Marlborough did not disdain to listen to the military advice of the ex-treasurer; but, however anxious to gratify his friend, he was too prudent to hazard such an advance into a hostile country, covered by strong posts, and to expose, at the same time, his flanks to the attack of a powerful army, under the command of the most able and enterprising among the french generals. He therefore deferred the consideration of the project, and, in conjunction with Eugene, proceeded to execute their original design.

Having reconnoitred the army of Villars, and found his position unassailable, the confederate generals proceeded against Aire and St. Venant, which were so situated as to permit a simultaneous investment. After a march of three days, they

took post to cover the intended operation; the right, under Eugene, stretching to the Lys, near Terouenne; the left, under Marlborough, to Lillers on the Lave. The head-quarters of the prince were at the castle of Bleney, near Terouenne, and those of Marlborough at the abbey of St. André, near Lillers. On the 6th, the two places were invested. The attack of St. Venant was conducted by the prince of Orange, with 20 battalions and five squadrons; that of Aire was confided to the prince of Anhalt, with 40 battalions and 40 squadrons. The heavy artillery and ammunition for the siege were embarked on the same morning at Menin under a guard of several battalions from the neighbouring garrisons, and a detachment of horse from the army; this convoy was to be landed at Marville, in the vicinity of St. Venant on the west.

Aire and St. Venant were both situated on the Lys: the latter was small, and protected only by ramparts of earth, forming nearly a regular hexagon, but rendered difficult of approach, by marshes and inundations. It was garrisoned by 2700 men, under the orders of brigadier Selve. Aire was a place of greater strength, being fortified with regular bastions, half-moons and horn-works, and the ditches inundated by the waters of the Lys. It had a garrison of 14 battalions and three regiments of dragoons, under the command of the brave and skilful general de Guebriant. At a little distance from the town was the fort of St. Francis, small, but strongly and regularly fortified. Both the town and the fort were protected by

marshes and inundations. The approaches were carried on against both places as speedily as the nature of the ground, and the want of besieging artillery, would permit.

While the two generals were anxiously expecting the arrival of the convoy from Menin, they received information that it had been surprised and destroyed by the enemy. With a heavy heart, Marlborough communicated the unwelcome intelligence to his correspondents in England.

To the Duchess.

"*Sept. 22.* — Till within these three days, during these nine years, I have never had occasion of sending any ill news. Our powder and other stores, for the carrying on of these two sieges, left Ghent last Thursday, under the convoy of 1200 foot, and 450 horse. They were attacked by the enemy and beaten; so that they blew up the powder, and sunk the store-boats. I have sent to all our neighbouring towns, to see if they can help us with stores sufficient for the carrying on of this siege; for we hope we have already enough for the taking of St. Venant. Prince Eugene and myself are resolved not to raise this siege as long as we have any hopes of getting ammunition. I am heart and soul yours."

Notwithstanding this heavy loss, and the difficulty of the approaches, St. Venant was in a few days reduced to extremity, and capitulated on the 29th.

Aire, however, maintained a vigorous and protracted defence. Much time was consumed in collecting the necessary supplies of artillery, and

serious obstructions were occasioned, by a succession of violent rains, to which he feelingly alludes, in a letter to lord Godolphin.

"*Oct.* 27. — I did write to you last Saturday by Ostend, which I hope you have received. You will, by that, as well as by this, see the fears I have, that the weather we have had for these last ten days will make it impossible for us to have any farther operation after the taking of this town, which has been so backwarded by the continual rains, that if they continue to *opiniatre* as they have done hitherto, and that the rains should continue, God knows when we shall have it; but take it we must, for we can't draw our cannon from the batteries. Our poor men are up to the knees in mud and water, which is a most grievous sight, and will occasion great sickness."

In addition to these delays, the spirited resistance of the garrison under their intrepid and skilful commander prolonged the defence, and the reduction of this petty place was not accomplished till the 8th of November, when the garrison surrendered.

In announcing the capitulation, the british general gives due credit to the bravery of the garrison, as well as to the spirit and skill manifested in the defence.

"*Nov.* 13. * * * * The garrison of Aire marched out yesterday 3628 strong, leaving upwards of 1600 men sick and wounded in the town. This defence was the best we have seen this year. Our foot are weak, but our horse are in a very good condition."

This conquest was purchased dearly by the allies; their loss in killed and wounded amounting to no less than 7000 men, exclusive of sick. The lateness of the season, and the continuance of heavy rains, prevented the execution of the project on the sea-coast, which had been approved by Eugene, provided the fortress had sooner surrendered, and the fine weather had continued.

We feel considerable regret in submitting to the reader a brief letter which the general wrote to Godolphin during the siege of Aire, as it affords a further proof of the decline of that influence, which he had held under the preceding administration, and which was so necessary for the successful prosecution of the war.

"*Sept.* 8.—I am to thank you for yours of the 18th, and for your kind endeavours for the getting monies to be returned; this is the right season for our making good bargains for the magazines of forage: the dutch have already made theirs; but as there is to be an advance of money to the undertakers, I am afraid of writing to the treasury about it, till I hear of more returns for the subsistence of the army; for should they, in the humour they are in, want but one fortnight's subsistence, it would cause a very great desertion. Whilst you were in the treasury, upon an extraordinary occasion, my letter to Amsterdam or Antwerp would have procured one hundred thousand pounds; but now, though the necessity were never so great, I durst not venture. Our letters from France continue to confirm our second victory in Spain, and that the duke of Anjou is gone to Madrid: half this success last year would

have secured us a good peace. God, who governs all things, will, I hope, make it end for the best. I have long wished, but never more than now, for a peace; for nothing looks well, I mean abroad, and you know how it is at home."

Marlborough, indeed, found the correspondence of his new colleagues very different from that of their predecessors. Instead of requesting his advice, and leaving to his judgment the plan of the campaign, and the arrangements with the allies, the queen, by her ministers, dictated both the military and diplomatic measures, in a manner calculated to display that jealousy which already began to operate towards the other members of the confederacy, and which ultimately produced that schism in the grand alliance so fatal to the interests of England and the welfare of Europe. We find secretary St. John adopting towards him a dictatorial language, and imperious tone to which he had been hitherto unaccustomed, and which was the more mortifying because it proceeded from one whom he had fostered as a son, and had introduced into office, and whose interest he had promoted with so much zeal as even to excite the disapprobation of his most intimate friends.

The general himself had been long sensible, that neither the emperor nor the States furnished their proper contingents, and had privately made continual representations on the subject; but, conscious that their deficiency arose more from inability than want of good will, he prudently avoided any vehement or public remonstrance, which might offend the two principal members of the grand

alliance. He, therefore, as we have already observed, frequently laboured to soothe the resentment of the british cabinet, and maintained that harmony which was necessary to prevent a separation of interests, or a clandestine negotiation with the enemy. But the new ministers acted with far less delicacy and precaution; for it seemed to be their object to excite dissensions, and to irritate the other members of the alliance, that England might have a pretext for opening a secret negotiation with France. The new secretary was, of all others, best calculated to pursue this oblique and selfish policy. He cavilled with the minor princes of the alliance, he detested the dutch, and he entertained equal inveteracy and contempt for the house of Austria. In the first official dispatch of consequence, which he addressed to the duke of Marlborough, he bitterly inveighed against the lukewarmness and inactivity of the emperor.

"I have told his excellency lord Townshend, in former letters, and I am commanded to repeat to your grace that the queen is extremely dissatisfied with the conduct of the imperial court, in almost every point relating to the common cause.

"Your grace will, by her majesty's order, desire that the States join with the queen in representing to the emperor, that it is expected from him that he should, after all that has been done for his family by Britain and Holland, do something for himself; and that the queen and the States do insist upon his sending, at this juncture, on his own account, a reinforcement into Spain."

In a letter, written soon afterwards, to Mr.

Drummond, he employed the most contemptuous expressions against this principal member of the grand alliance. He observes, "that house of Austria has been the evil genius of Britain. I never think of that family, without recollecting the image of a man braiding a rope of hay, while his ass bites it off at the other end." *

He was no less disposed to listen to the overtures recently made by France, and which it now became the object of the british cabinet to encourage.

With such feelings, a minister was not likely to imitate the example of Marlborough in casting aside petty jealousies and interests, and pursuing with integrity the grand principle of harmony and co-operation, which was necessary to secure a safe and honourable peace. All his official dispatches addressed by the secretary to the british general, sufficiently developed that narrow system of policy, which, under pretence of exacting the fulfilment of their mutual compact, tended to insulate England from all her allies.

We now close our account of the military transactions of the year with a brief review of the war in other quarters.

On the Rhine, the system, as we have already stated, was wholly defensive; and the french forces, being no less weakened than those of the allies, by draughts for the Netherlands and Dauphiné, no event occurred of sufficient consequence to illustrate the short command of general Groenfeld.

* Correspondence of Bolingbroke, v. i. p. 59.

On the side of the Alps, where greater preparations had been made, the result was far from realising the grand designs conceived by Marlborough and Eugene.

The disputes between the duke of Savoy and the court of Vienna continued with unabated violence, and turned on the petty territory of the Langhes. The emperor offered to grant the Vigevenasco and the dependent villages; but as the Langhes were fiefs of the empire, he declared his inability to dispose of them, without the previous consent of the germanic body. He proposed, however, to grant the investiture, but to withhold the possession till the approbation of the aulic council was procured. This offer was rejected by the duke of Savoy, on the plea that it was taking from him with one hand what was given with the other. All the efforts of the Maritime Powers to compromise this dispute were, unfortunately, unavailing; and the letters of general Palmes and Mr. Chetwynd, from Turin and Vienna, evince the fatal jealousies of the two courts, and the obstinacy with which they supported their respective pretensions. These bickerings produced the most disastrous effect: Victor Amadeus acted the same part as in the preceding year, by refusing to take the field, under pretence of indisposition. Accordingly, marshal Daun assumed the command of the combined forces, and again found a formidable opponent in the duke of Berwick, who ably defended the avenues to the valley of Barcelonette, and took the necessary precautions to prevent the rise of the insurgents in Dauphiné and the Vivarais. The

whole operations amounted, therefore, to little more than a series of marches and countermarches; and before the close of October, the austrian general retired behind the Alps; and Berwick, after sending a reinforcement of 34 battalions and 31 squadrons to the army of Noailles, placed the remainder of his troops in winter-quarters.*

In consequence of this failure, and the inactivity of the insurgents, the expedition against the coast of Languedoc was abortive. M. de Seissan took possession of Cette without opposition, and advanced to Agde; but here terminated this petty incursion. The marquis de Roquelaure, governor of Languedoc, took instant precaution to prevent the rise of the insurgents, and dispatched a body of troops against Cette; at the same time, the duke of Noailles marching from the frontiers of Catalonia against Agde, the project was abandoned, and the troops re-embarked, with the loss of fifty men.† The principal benefit derived from this well-projected, but ill-seconded enterprise, was that of retarding the mission of reinforcements from the army of Berwick to Spain, and the diversion which it created on the side of Catalonia and Aragon, and which prevented the intended junction of Noailles with Philip.

In Spain, the opening of the campaign appeared to promise all the success which the most sanguine imagination could anticipate from the magnitude of the plan, and the means provided for its

* Mem. de Berwick, v. ii. p. 93.

† Letter from M. de Seissan to the duke of Marlborough, in August.

execution; but on this, as on other occasions, the public hope was cruelly disappointed, by the operation of jarring interests and personal contentions between the generals.

From the vigorous and extensive preparations on both sides of the peninsula, sanguine hopes were entertained of a successful campaign. Two armies assembled, in the spring, in Portugal and Catalonia; the former, under the sole command of the marquis of Villaverde, as lord Galway was indisposed with the gout; the latter under that of marshal Staremberg and general Stanhope. The portuguese, who were earliest in the field, were, as usual, ill provided, and ineffective; and the six regiments of native troops, which, contrary to the opinion of Marlborough, had been raised on british pay, verified the unfavourable judgment which he had before expressed of such expedients. In the beginning of the campaign, the troops posted themselves at Elvas, and remained on the defensive, suffering the spaniards, under the marquis of Bay, to occupy Miranda de Douro, and invest Braganza. Soon afterwards, the spanish forces being diminished by the march of a considerable detachment, under the marquis of Bay, to join the royal army in Aragon, the portuguese recovered Miranda, raised the siege of Braganza, and proceeding to the frontiers of Estremadura, took some inconsiderable posts, but continued inactive under the pretence of waiting for the advance of the confederate army from Catalonia.

On the side of Catalonia, the allied forces took

the field in the middle of May. Threatened on the north by Noailles, and opposed by a superior army under Philip on the frontiers of Aragon, Staremberg could only act on the defensive, and prevent the capture of Balaguer, by taking post at Agramonte. Here he was joined by general Stanhope, on the 29th of May, with 1000 recruits from Italy, and a supply of money. On the 7th of June, king Charles himself reached the camp; and thus the two rival princes were opposed to each other in the field; and though under the tutelage of their respective generals, Staremberg and Villadarias, they witnessed events not unworthy the presence of contending monarchs.

Still, however, the allied troops, from their inferiority of force, remained on the defensive, and six weeks were consumed in desultory operations. But towards the middle of July, the army was increased by the junction of 6000 veteran germans, whom admiral Norris had landed at Tarragona with a supply of provisions. It was further strengthened by a corps of 4000 men from the force opposed to Noailles, who had marched in haste into Languedoc, to repel the british expedition which had landed at Cette.

Philip having been compelled, from want of provisions, to fall back towards Lerida, from whence he drew his supplies, the confederates rapidly advanced and overtook him near Almenara. After some delay, arising from a difference of opinion between Staremberg and Stanhope, the latter, eager for battle, "hectored the king into

compliance," * and towards evening, an irregular engagement took place at the passage of the Naguera, near Alfarez, in which Philip was defeated and driven into Lerida. Although the loss of the enemy did not amount to more than 1500 men, a panic spread among the spanish troops, and they continued their retreat to Saragossa, hoping to prevent the allies from anticipating them at the passage of the Ebro. Being now joined by the marquis de Bay, with a reinforcement from the western frontier, they resolved to make a stand, and a regular battle was fought. The valour of the confederate troops, the skilful manœuvres of the generals, and the gallant intrepidity of Stanhope, ensured a complete victory; and the spanish forces, reduced to a remnant of 8000 men, fled towards the frontier of the province of Soria. Philip himself retreated precipitately to Madrid, and, after a stay of two days, removed the royal residence and tribunals, amidst the tears and regret of his faithful subjects, to Valladolid, the ancient capital of Castile.

Meanwhile, Charles entered Saragossa in triumph, and, retaking possession of Aragon, conciliated the people, by restoring their darling privileges, and ancient constitution. Violent disputes, however, immediately ensued, as before, between Staremberg and Stanhope; the former proposing to pursue the retreating enemy, and intercept their communication with France, by the occupation of Navarre, which was almost defenceless. But the

* Letter from general Carpenter — Memoirs of the Bourbon Kings of Spain — Somerville's Queen Anne.

urgent remonstrances of Stanhope prevailed, and the allies directed their march to Madrid, expecting to be joined by the portuguese, and hoping that the possession of the capital would secure the conquest of Spain.

On the 28th of September, Charles made a second triumphal entry into Madrid, preceded by an escort of 2000 horse. But an ominous solitude reigned in the lonesome streets; the greater part of the inhabitants followed their beloved monarch, and scarcely any remained except those who, from age, infirmities, or poverty, were unable to remove. Chagrin and vexation overwhelmed the disappointed monarch, and quitting his cavalcade in its progress to the palace of Retiro, he retreated hastily through the gate of Alcala, exclaiming, "Madrid is a desert!" and took up his residence at Villaverde. In such inauspicious circumstances he was proclaimed king of Spain and the Indies; the bourbon government was dissolved: and the different departments of an ephemeral administration distributed among the few spanish nobles who adhered to his cause.

We find a letter from king Charles written to the duke of Marlborough on the subsequent day, announcing his success; but betraying uneasy forebodings, and demanding instant succours.

"*Camp of Villaverde, near Madrid, Oct. 29.*

"My lord duke and prince; — Having learnt some days ago, by prince Eugene of Savoy, that the letter which I wrote you from Balaguer, the 20th of July, had not reached you, although the letters I wrote of the same date to that prince were

received, I inclose herewith the copy, not doubting that the present will be delivered to you more safely. I am persuaded, my prince, that you are already fully informed of the glorious progress which the common cause has at last made here, as I have advanced to the very centre of my monarchy, and have opened the way to reduce it entirely, in a short time, by the means of succours and support proportionate to the importance of the stake; and the benefits will redound to all Europe. You will know, however, also, how many efforts the enemy employ to re-establish their army with the troops they have still in Estremadura, and towards the frontier of Portugal; and that, besides, they expect a great number from France.

" I shall, however, omit no exertions to maintain myself this winter; and I hope also to contribute to the advancement of the common good, by some assistance out of the countries that I have just occupied; but it is well known that they are drained and ruined entirely, and it is necessary that I should be very promptly supported on the part of my good allies, to prevent the evident danger to which the common cause will be exposed, in case they are wanting, of losing the fruit of our victories. On the contrary, by their prompt arrival, we may be enabled to put a fortunate and honourable end to the war in these countries.

" Count Gallas and the baron de Zinzerling will give an exact account of the actual situation of affairs here, to which I refer; and from thence you will easily judge how much it is necessary at present to finish the work of the alliance, which

the blessing of God has placed in so good a situation. I continue to feel the same particular confidence in your great zeal and good offices, not doubting that you will contribute, with all your power and credit, to an end as pressing as it is necessary and advantageous. This is what I earnestly recommended to you, and you may be assured of my perfect esteem and gratitude." *

A letter from general Stanhope to lord Dartmouth, which was inclosed in a short note to the duke of Marlborough, depicts, with less reserve, the critical situation of affairs, and presents a striking picture of the desolation which prevailed in the capital, and of the surprising efforts made by the castilians to counteract the reverses of their beloved monarch.

" *Oct.* 4. — Having halted near Saragossa ten days for bread, we arrived here on the 20th of September. The duke of Anjou removed to Valladolid, from whence the duchess and young prince are gone to Victoria. The duke of Anjou was, on the 9th, at Valladolid, where he had quartered about 8000 men, and was to march on the 30th, to join his army from Estremadura.

" We have dispatched several messengers to our friends, pressing them to join us, since they have no enemy left on their frontier ; and on the success of these instances, which we have repeated to them, will depend the fate of our campaign. They have, in a condition to march, 30 battalions of foot, and above 3000 horse. If they will join us, we shall try to have another battle, which, in all probability, must be decisive. If they do not, we shall have

* Translation from the french original.

some difficulty in making a retreat to Aragon, for the duke of Anjou will have above double our number of horse, and be equal, at least, to us in foot. The country is our enemy, and we are not masters, in Castile, of more ground than we encamp on. It will certainly be a surprise to your lordship to learn, that since the battle not one officer in the duke of Anjou's service has left him, that the greater part of the grandees, all the civil and ministerial officers that reside at Madrid have followed him, insomuch, that at our first arrival here, the town appeared a desert. It is true, that since we have been here, great numbers of people of quality are returned, and express themselves to be well-wishers to us; but such is the turn they have conceived by the severe examples made by the duke of Anjou heretofore, that they dare not be active for us. We are, at present, without communication with Aragon, and uncertain whether the portuguese will advance far enough to give us a communication with them."

In vain the confederate commanders expected the arrival of the portuguese; in vain general Stanhope sent an official communication of the occupation of Madrid, and pressed their immediate junction, without which, Spain would be irrecoverably lost. Unfortunately, lord Galway being indisposed, and lord Portmore not having yet assumed the command, there was no british general of authority sufficient to urge on these sluggish auxiliaries; and Villaverde, unwilling to act a subordinate part, sent to his court for instructions. The king of Portugal was instantly exhorted to

detach 3000 foot, and 1000 or 1500 horse to the british forces; and the marquis Das Minas proposed to take the command, and advance, without a moment's delay, to Madrid. A royal council was immediately held on this proposal, and, after much debate, it was negatived, by the influence of the duke of Cadaval, who was evidently in the french interest. The ministers of the allies being called to a conference, demonstrated the facility as well as the necessity of assisting king Charles. But these deliberations led to no result. The portuguese complained that the subsidies, promised to them by England and the States, had not been paid, and declared that they would not take upon themselves the charge of the expedition; while general Stanhope was apprised that nothing could be expected from the court of Lisbon.*

Meanwhile, a scene of the most affecting nature occurred in the camp and court of the fugitive prince. While he was awaiting the uncertainty of his fate, at the head of his discouraged and desponding soldiery, Noailles arrived from France with a commission to ascertain the real state and resources of the country, and rouse the Spaniards to an effort in defence of their independence. In a solemn assembly of the nobles, he dwelt on the impossibility of furnishing adequate assistance from France, urged them to exert their native energies, and expatiated on the weakness and disunion among the allies. His eloquent appeal to the national honour and feeling was not ineffectual;

* Letter of M. Lefevre from Lisbon, Oct. 13–24, inclosed in one from Mr. St. John to the duke of Marlborough, dated Oct. 27. O. S.

they joined in a pathetic address, requesting aid from France, and at the same time manifested their own patriotism, by exertions still greater than they had made in 1706.

The youthful monarch still further roused the zeal of his loyal subjects, by the firmness and dignity with which he bore his reverse of fortune. He disdainfully rejected all offers of a partition; and announced his resolution to live king of Spain, or bury himself under the ruins of the monarchy. The spirit of enthusiasm kindled in the court and camp, rapidly spread from town to town, and from village to village, while every rank and class of people vied in their devotion to their monarch, and their sacrifices for their country.

In these favourable circumstances, Vendome, at the request of Philip, arrived to assume the command of the army. Cheered by the zeal and ardour which he witnessed in his passage, he anticipated the most propitious result; and hastened to give a proper direction to the national energy, and the intrepidity of the monarch. Leaving the allies to wear themselves away by dissipation and inactivity, or in destructive contests with the native peasantry, he employed the important interval in collecting and organising the troops. By extraordinary exertions, and in the short space of six weeks, he succeeded in forming an army of 25,000 men, completely appointed in the face of a victorious enemy. With this force, his first object was, to prevent the junction of the portuguese with the army at Madrid, by taking post at the important pass of Almarez, on the Tagus. The event fully answered his ex-

pectations; for the portuguese, ever lukewarm in the cause, now eagerly seized this additional pretext to remain on the defensive; and the forces at Madrid were left alone to contend with the storm which was rapidly gathering around them.

The exertions of the enemy were commensurate with the magnitude of the stake for which they were contending. The expedition of Cette having been frustrated by the vigilance of Noailles, and the want of support from the army on the side of the Alps, the french troops, thus set at liberty in Languedoc, joined by strong reinforcements from the army of Berwick, were poured into Catalonia. They prepared to invest Gerona, the key of the province on the north, and form a communication with the army of Philip, which was daily increasing in force, and expected to move in the direction of Aragon, to intercept the retreat of the allies.

The situation of the confederates being thus rendered highly perilous, their generals directed their whole attention to secure the safe return of king Charles, and the retreat of the army into Catalonia. After a royal proclamation, announcing the removal of the court from Madrid to Toledo, he quitted the vicinity of the capital, on the 11th of November; and, on the retreat of the troops, the sound of bells and acclamations announced his own degradation, and the triumph of his rival. He took up a temporary residence at Cien-Pozuelos. While the confederates remained in these quarters, preparing for the departure of Charles and their own retreat, Philip had re-entered Madrid in triumph, amidst the enthusiastic acclamations of

every class; and, after a stay of two days, to re-establish his government, rejoined Vendome, who had rapidly advanced, at the head of his cavalry, towards Guadalaxara, and was followed by the infantry, in hopes of still overtaking the allies in their projected retreat.

In the midst of these accumulating dangers, the austrian prince took his final departure; and, under an escort of 2000 horse, withdrew through Aragon to Barcelona, where he arrived on the 15th of December.

Having secured the person of the prince, the primary care of the confederate generals was, to extricate themselves from their critical situation. With the hope of outstripping their opponents, who were yet at a considerable distance, they retired, in three columns, through the mountainous country which borders the frontier of Castile. They had, however, fatally miscalculated on their own situation, and the efforts of the enemy. Harassed by swarms of partisans and hostile peasantry, loaded with baggage and plunder, and entangled in almost impracticable roads, their progress was slow and laborious; while their active and vigilant opponents were hourly gaining ground. On the 6th of December, the third column, composed of the 6000 british troops under general Stanhope, was overtaken at Brihuega, where they had inadvertently halted. As the imperialists and dutch were at a considerable distance in advance, they were surprised before they suspected the approach of the enemy, in sufficient force for an attack, and, after a desperate resistance of two days, in a town de-

fended only by an antique wall, surrendered prisoners of war. *

Staremberg not receiving timely notice, advanced too late for their relief, and reaching the heights in the vicinity, observed the whole spanish army drawn up in order of battle; while the melancholy silence which reigned in Brihuega, announced the fate of his companions in arms. Thus doubly impelled to effect his retreat, he took up a strong position near Villa Viciosa, with the hope of amusing the enemy till night should enable him to

* From the letter of general Stanhope to lord Dartmouth, it evidently appears, that this disastrous event arose entirely from miscalculating the distance of the enemy, not deeming it possible that the infantry should follow the cavalry in sufficient time to co-operate in the attack of Brihuega. In consequence of this erroneous estimate, Stanhope did not even place out-posts; and, he observes, that the hostile foot made a forced march of forty-five leagues in eight days.

Without entering into the merits of the case, we subjoin an extract from a letter written by general Pepper to the duke of Marlborough, which will, at least, serve to shew the want of discipline and concert among the allied forces.

"*March* 29. 1711. — As your grace never condemns any till heard, so I cannot doubt in meeting with your lordship's favourable opinion, when I assure you that I neither gave my consent for marching the british troops into Brihuega, nor was it any neglect of mine that we were taken for want of an out-guard, but to the contrary; it being ordered by me, and dismissed afterwards by lieut.-general Carpenter; nor did I give my consent in delivering up the town, and so far from knowing any thing of it, that I did not so much as know of a chamade being beat by Mr. Stanhope, having defended the town half an hour after the chamade was beat, entering the houses with dragoons dismounted, and having beat the enemy out, killing numbers of them, and they of us. I set fire afterwards to the houses, and maintained my former post; at the same time Mr. Stanhope did capitulate with the enemy, without making any disposition of retiring into the castle with the troops, which was abundantly stronger than the town, and might have been defended some days, and so surrendered us up without my opinion or consent."

withdraw. But the ardour of Vendome, and the spirit of Philip, were not to be arrested in the full career of success. He was vigorously attacked, and, after a desperate effort, repelled the enemy; but, dreading the renewal of the conflict on the ensuing day, he spiked the artillery on the field of battle, and made a hasty retreat. He reached Barcelona on the 6th of January, with a force of only 7000 men, the discomfited remnant of that army which was expected to effect the conquest of Spain. The natural consequence of this fatal reverse was, the loss of almost all the conquests effected since the commencement of the war; for before the end of February, the possessions of Charles were circumscribed to Balaguer and the two maritime fortresses of Tarragona and Barcelona, with the intermediate and dependent districts.*

We cannot quit the subject of Spain, without adverting to a strong proof of the effects produced by the decline of the duke of Marlborough's influence in England. We must recall to the reader's recollection the repeated offers of king Charles to confer the government of the Netherlands on the british general, as a proof of gratitude for his eminent services. Marlborough, as we have already observed, declined the acceptance of this honourable and lucrative station, in consequence of the jealousies which it excited in Holland; but he had never relinquished the hopes that some favourable

* This narrative is drawn from the Memoires de St. Philippe — De Noailles — From the correspondence of general Stanhope and other british officers—Targe—And Memoirs of the Bourbon Kings of Spain.

circumstances might arise to remove these objections. At this period, the ingratitude of his countrymen, and the prospect of unfavourable changes in the ministry, induced him to solicit the fulfilment of a promise so often and solemnly made, as affording an honourable retreat, should he deem it expedient to retire from England.

In conformity with his orders, Mr. Craggs, the british envoy at Barcelona, repeatedly sounded the spanish ministers; but could obtain no precise or specific answer with respect to the king's intentions. At length, however, he was drily told that their sovereign would himself apprise general Stanhope of his decision. The result of the general's application we give in the words of Mr. Craggs.

"His majesty made the following answer: that to tell him the truth, upon your grace's resigning your pretensions, he had immediately put that affair out of his own disposition, into the hands of the imperial court; that count Zinzendorf had informed him, your grace had spoke to him of it, and that he would write to him to confer with you about it; that if he thought your grace desirous of that government, he would do his utmost to have it conferred upon you, so it might be with the general consent, and particularly of the dutch."

CHAPTER 97.

1710.

Marlborough quits the army and repairs to the Hague.— Solicited by foreign powers to continue in the command.— Receives discouraging accounts of the state of affairs in England. — Parliamentary proceedings. — Omission of the customary vote of thanks for his military services. — His anxiety respecting the fate of the duchess. — Announces his resolution to resign if she is removed. — Her intended disgrace deferred. — Artful intervention of the duke of Shrewsbury. — Correspondence. — Epistolary communications of the duchess to the queen through the agency of Sir David Hamilton, one of the royal physicians. — Alarms of the queen, lest the duchess should publish her private letters. — Intervention of Shrewsbury. — The duchess vindicates herself against the charge of peculation, and corrupt sale of offices.

In consequence of the continual rains, as well as of his apprehensions of heavy responsibility in case of failure, Marlborough relinquished his project against Calais or Boulogne; and on the surrender of Aire, repaired to the Hague, to fulfil the instructions from the british cabinet, as well as to concert with Eugene and the States the measures for the next campaign. If any thing could compensate for the indignities which he suffered from the tories, it was the high consideration in which he was held by all foreign powers. As if he was

the animating principle of the grand alliance, all the other members united in persuading him to retain the command; and Eugene particularly declared, that if his colleague retired, he would never again act in the Netherlands. He had, indeed, full need of all these consolations, to reconcile him to the melancholy state of affairs in England, of which, his correspondents transmitted the most discouraging accounts.

On the 25th of November the parliament met, and the temper of the house of commons was manifested by the choice of Mr. Bromley as speaker, notwithstanding a faint attempt on the part of the whigs to re-elect Mr. Smith, who had formerly filled that office. The speech from the throne, more guarded than had been generally expected, was the production of Harley, in conformity with his professed principles of moderation. The queen gave no assurance of attachment to the grand alliance, but mentioned, in general terms, the necessity of "prosecuting the war with the utmost vigour in all its parts, particularly in Spain, as the likeliest means, with the blessing of God, to procure a safe and honourable peace for us, and all our allies, whose support she said I have truly at heart." The emphatic mention of Spain was introduced, at once to convey a reflection on the general, and on the late ministry, for the zeal which they had displayed in prosecuting the war in the Netherlands.

In the part of the speech addressed to both houses, the queen, according to the tory phrase, declared that she was resolved to support and encourage the established church, to preserve the

british constitution according to the union, and to continue the indulgence, by law allowed, to scrupulous consciences.

It was, however, deemed expedient to convey an assurance which was calculated to soothe the fears entertained for the protestant succession, and to conciliate the electoral family. The queen therefore concluded with stating, "that all these may be transmitted to posterity, I shall employ none but such as are heartily for the protestant succession, in the house of Hanover, for the interest of which family, no person can be more truly concerned than myself."

The total silence observed on the grand alliance, and the successes of the preceding campaign, and the particular stress laid on the intended prosecution of the war in Spain, gave great offence to the whigs, as well as to the personal adherents of Marlborough and Godolphin. The term indulgence, as applied to the dissenters, was also disliked by both parties; being considered by the tories as too liberal, and by the whigs, as not equivalent to the word *toleration.*

The addresses from the two houses were mere echoes of the speech, except a particular expression, which was moved by Mr. Lechmere, a whig-member, in favour of the protestant succession, and seconded by Harley, on the ground, that the rejection of such a clause might appear a slight on the house of Hanover. *

It was deemed extraordinary, that after the queen had observed a solemn thanksgiving for the late

* Debates of the Commons, v. iv. p. 171.

successes in Flanders, no reference was made to the services of the duke of Marlborough, nor any indication given by the ministry to move the usual vote of thanks; particularly as the present year, though not distinguished by any brilliant victory, was marked by bloodless advantages, of no less consequence, which made a deeper breach in the iron frontier of France than any preceding campaign. The friends of the general determined to vindicate his honour from this tacit aspersion, and lord Scarborough moved a vote of thanks in the house of lords on the 28th of November, which was seconded by the duke of Richmond, and warmly supported by the marquess of Wharton. This proposal embarrassed the ministry, who were unwilling to acquiesce, and yet did not choose to agitate the question by open opposition. A whisper being conveyed to the duke of Devonshire, by some of the ministerial party, that it would be more properly deferred till the return of the general, the question was suffered to drop, without a debate; though some petulant objections were raised by the duke of Argyle, who was anxious to signalise his enmity to his late patron. The motion, however, was highly offensive to the new ministers, and is thus stigmatised by St. John, in the language of party rancour: "One would imagine that lord Scarborough was hired by somebody, who wished the duke of Marlborough ill, *to take so unconcerted and so ridiculous a measure.*"*

* St. John to Drummond, Nov. 28.—Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. i. p. 24.—Chandler—Lediard—Tindal.

This public slight was followed by another mortification, still more afflicting to his private feelings. The fate of the duchess of Marlborough, at this period, appears to have been a subject of the most anxious solicitude to all parties, and to none more than to him. We have already shewn the impatience of the queen to give full scope to her resentment against her discarded favourite, and the spirited resolution of the duke, to make her disgrace the signal of his own immediate resignation.

Although the secret advisers of the queen had procured the dismission of Sunderland and Godolphin, and witnessed, with satisfaction and surprise, the forbearance of Marlborough, under severe and repeated trials; they yet durst not venture to put his patience to the final test, by suffering the queen to discharge the duchess. The cajolery of the duke of Shrewsbury was, therefore, again employed, to soothe his resentment, and induce him to retain his post, till their schemes were more fully matured, by persuading him that her dismission might be deferred till after his return, and even giving hopes that it might be prevented by his personal interference. Strange as it may seem, that a nobleman, who had been guilty of so much duplicity, could yet flatter himself that his arts would be again successful; it is still more strange to find the ex-treasurer, who had been so frequently deceived, once more caught by the obvious lure, and even prevailing on his friend, against his better judgment, to degrade himself, by replying to this insidious overture. Nothing, indeed, but the correspondence which we shall here submit to the reader,

could prove such a want of spirit and foresight in a veteran statesman.

Mr. Craggs was the person through whom the suggestion was conveyed, and the result is communicated in a letter written by him to the duchess.

"*Tuesday, Aug.* 29.—Yesterday I had a letter from the duke of Shrewsbury, to meet him at his house in town, which I did accordingly. He began with telling me the great respect he had for the duke of Marlborough, and his earnest desire to live in perfect friendship with him; that he had done to the utmost of his power to prevent several things that had happened, but was not able to prevail, and would continue to do his utmost for the future; but what effect it might have, he would not be answerable. He did confess that there were a great many things that might make the duke of Marlborough uneasy; yet he hoped, for all that, he would have no other thoughts, but that of going on, and he verily believed he would find it for his service; and though there was talk of lord Rivers going to Hanover, to supply his place, he bid me assure the duke of Marlborough there was no such thing, which he pretended he was not sure of till lately. He said, that a great many things might happen between this and the duke of Marlborough's return, and then he would be a proper judge for himself; but, before that, begged that his grace would take no resolution but that of proceeding as before.

"There was something in these pretences so provoking, and particularly that of not knowing lord Rivers's business to Hanover, that perhaps

I was too much affected, and answered to the following purpose: the duke of Shrewsbury could not be insensible that the duke of Marlborough had met with an usage to which no story could shew a parallel, considering his circumstances. He answered, 'Indeed, I think so:'—that the duke of Marlborough had given the power to the queen, by his services, which had enabled her majesty to do what had lately happened. He answered, 'I think 'there is too much truth in it, and I have done all 'I could to make them sensible of it.' I proceeded, that notwithstanding all these shocks, I durst say, that for the sake of his country, for his own honour, which was concerned very highly in making an end of what he had, with so much courage and conduct, pains and hazard, brought so near a most honourable and happy conclusion, (besides, he had received so many importunities from the States and the rest of his friends, and particularly since 92 and 93* here had used him so ill,) that he thought it his duty, from all these reasons, to proceed to the utmost of his power; and that there was but one thing could happen to prevent him, which was, any affront or ill usage to your grace, and, in that case, he would not be able to proceed any farther, which I believed all the world would justify him in. And that in all his answers to the States and the others, upon their importunities, he always made that exception, which they all agreed to be reasonable; and that I durst say the duke of Shrewsbury could not but think so too. To which he an-

* Probably Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley.

swered, 'It was very right, and I did think so.' And if there was no other objection, he durst say that would not be given him; for he owned, if it was, nobody could blame the duke of Marlborough's resentment of it. After which, he made great professions of his service for your grace, that there was nobody he would be prouder to serve, for that there was nobody that had so many great and good qualities. Thus I have told you the substance of the conversation, and you will judge as well as any body, of what consequence it will be."

In communicating, however, the account of this conversation to the duchess, Mr. Craggs, from delicacy, omitted some particulars, which related to the proposal of promoting a reconciliation between the queen and her, and the candid declaration of Shrewsbury, that it was impracticable. We trace this omission by a letter from Godolphin to the duke.

"*Aug.* 31.—This letter goes by Collins the messenger, with three letters, by lady Marlborough, to go by him at the same time, which ought to make mine very short; but not knowing when I may have any other opportunity of writing so safely, I shall lay hold on this to tell you my thoughts on some points.

"Mr. Craggs has given me an account of his late conversation with the duke of Shrewsbury, and told me he had also told or written it to lady Marlborough, all except one particular. By what I have heard since from her upon it, I find I have not exactly the same thoughts of it that her grace seems to have. Possibly if he had told that par-

ticular also to her grace, or if she could be sensible of it, as it is, there would not be so much difference in our thoughts upon this point. But be that as it will, I must own I am not altogether so sure of the duke of Shrewsbury's absolute insincerity, as many others of my acquaintance seem to be; and though I were of that mind, as well as they, yet I should still be of opinion, that Mr. Craggs ought to carry himself so to the duke of Shrewsbury, as not to let him imagine he or you think him so; and such a sort of behaviour to his grace from Mr. Craggs is, in my opinion, the surest way of preventing any farther mischief to you, till you come to England, which I take to be the chief point at present; and as far as you are of this mind or not, you will judge best what orders are proper for you to send to Mr. Craggs."

In conformity with this advice, Marlborough condescended to transmit his orders to Mr. Craggs, though in a letter to lord Godolphin, he expressed his conviction that no interposition could prevent the disgrace of his wife.

"*Sept.* 18.—I have received the favour of yours, by Collins, and I have accordingly sent directions to Mr. Craggs, to use his best endeavours, that the duke of Shrewsbury may think that I depend upon his friendship; for I agree entirely with you. I fear lady Marlborough and some of her friends judge very wrong, when they think that the queen has any difficulty as to the parting with her, on account of her solemn promise."

What renders this conduct of the two friends more inexplicable is, that, at this very period

Godolphin was convinced that Shrewsbury was active in spreading the most calumnious aspersions against the general, to whom he was making such professions of amity, as we find asserted in a previous letter. *

"The great ferment and agitation of men's minds increases every day, and the credit continues to languish very much. However, as I have told you, in all my late letters, I have no doubt but the subsistence for your army will be regularly paid, till the end of the campaign, though I think it is likely to be a long one, if this fair weather we have to-day continue, and that you go on with your project, which I very much wish, as what, in my opinion, is like to give the greatest strength to you and your friends, and to the allies in general. For whenever the time comes that parliament assembles, the main point to be considered will be, whether the allies must be supported or deserted; and, consequently, if there be any particular situation in their affairs, of more advantage than formerly. The difficulty upon those who are of the latter opinion, will be made so much the greater by it, and render the malicious insinuations of Mr. Harley, &c. still more absurd and ridiculous; their main point being to convince parliament that you never was in earnest to conclude the war. Now, though nothing can be more notoriously false than this; yet nothing is more true than that this is their intention; and *nobody deeper in it than the duke of Shrewsbury.*"

* Lord Godolphin to the duke, Sunday, Aug. 20.

Notwithstanding the professions of the lord chamberlain, and the opinion of Godolphin, we find Marlborough depicting to the duchess the extreme uncertainty and peril of her situation.

" *Sept.* 13.—I shall write to you to-morrow by the post, but by this opportunity of lord Stair, I may write what I must not venture by the post. I believe you judge very right that the queen has deferred her resolution of putting you out till my return. But if there be any pretence given, they will do it before; for they are impatient of having that blow given. The queen is as desirous and as eager in this remove as Mr. Harley and Mrs. Masham can be. I do by no means approve of the behaviour of the duke of Shrewsbury in this whole matter; but remember, as lady Peterborough used to say, that I tell you that he will be, as well as the duke of Somerset, duped; for nobody has a real power but Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley. In my opinion, all reasoning serves but to cheat ourselves; for no good judgment can be made, when one has to do with Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley; so that the only measure in which you and I may be sure of not being deceived is, to know the truth, that whatever can be done to make us uneasy will be attempted. I am of opinion, that the king of France has taken his resolution not to think of peace till he sees, this winter, the behaviour of England. You must not flatter yourself that the elector of Hanover is capable of acting a vigorous part. I believe he will shew that he esteems me; but at the same time, will be desirous of meddling as little as possible with the affairs of England, for

which I cannot much blame him, for not caring to have to do with so villainous a people.

"I am still of the opinion that the only good you can do is, to be quiet, by which you will give them no handle to use you ill before my return."

It was not, indeed, without reason, that he filled his letters with these repeated admonitions, to discontinue both epistolary and personal intercourse with the queen, and to maintain a respectful silence, from a conviction that such interference would only aggravate the resentment of her majesty, and produce the most mischievous effects. Unfortunately, his wife was not of a temper to follow his prudent advice, and her mind was continually working, how she should either persuade or frighten the queen to consent to a reconciliation.

After her imprudent importunities against the dismission of lord Sunderland, the intercourse between them took a new turn. The queen was alarmed by her refusal to part with the confidential letters, which had passed in the long period of their intimacy, and justly dreaded, lest provocation should induce her to expose those effusions of tenderness to the public eye. The duchess, indeed, artfully wrought on the apprehensions which her equivocal answers had excited. She wrote long narratives of their past transactions, sent copies of the queen's most confidential letters, and overwhelmed her with papers and documents, which were calculated to increase her alarms.

Sir David Hamilton, who was made the channel of these communications, was one of the royal physicians, and owed his situation to the interest

of the duchess. Being a man of conciliating manners and sound sense, he acquired the confidence of the queen, and was treated with uncommon attention by Mrs. Masham. Notwithstanding his gratitude to the duchess, and his respect for the duke, it could not be expected that he should sacrifice his own interest, by offending the queen and the new favourite; but he never forgot his obligations to his former benefactress, and repeatedly gave her the most prudent and salutary advice. About the time of the dismission of Sunderland, she received from him daily intelligence of the temper of his royal mistress; and he suggested expedients, which might contribute to recover her lost influence, or at least to prevent any public mark of the queen's displeasure.

After the dismission of Godolphin, when all immediate intercourse ceased with the queen, Sir David Hamilton became the channel of a constant though indirect correspondence, in which the duchess vainly hoped to work on the feelings of her royal mistress, by recapitulating her services, and by repeatedly referring to the ill-treatment she had undergone through the influence of Mrs. Masham and Harley. These continued appeals served, however, only to irritate and render a reconciliation more impracticable; and the only reason which can be assigned for their continuance, is, the mode in which the correspondence was conducted.

Copies of the letters written by the duchess to Sir David Hamilton, whom she designates under the cipher of 260, are found in great abundance among her posthumous papers, and, if published,

would fill a volume. None of those written by him, excepting a short note, which will appear in a subsequent chapter, are extant; but we judge of their import by the answers and remarks of his correspondent. He evidently did not conceal his opinion, that she behaved with unbecoming violence, and in particular discouraged her design of publishing the queen's private letters. At the same time, he seems to have acted the part of a moderator with the queen, and in particular to have represented the danger of provoking to extremity, a woman of the most imperious character, who was justly entitled to complain of the falsehoods imputed to her, and the indignities heaped upon her by the agents of the ministry. Indeed, it is possible that his timely interference prevented the duchess from committing such an outrage against her royal benefactress, as exposing to the public eye the tender epistles which had been written in the height of affection; for she herself acknowledges that he prevailed on her to suspend her design till the return of the duke. *

In this predicament, the queen was reduced alternately to soothe and threaten her former favourite, and resorted to the intervention of the

* We find the rumour of such a publication circulated at this period; and it is mentioned in a letter from secretary St. John to Mr. Drummond, dated Nov. 28: "I had almost forgot to tell you an instance of the admirable temper in which the great man is likely, on his return, to find his wife. Among other extravagancies, she now declares she will print the queen's letters; letters writ whilst her majesty had a good opinion of her, and the fondness for her, which her violent behaviour since that time has absolutely eradicated."—Bolingbroke's Correspondence. vol. i. p. 27.

physician, as well as of other persons, whom she considered as likely to obtain the suppression of these documents. The duchess, however, continued firm, and the fear of driving her to extremities suspended her removal.

As a last resource, the duke of Shrewsbury was employed to discover her real intentions, and, if possible, to prevent the threatened publication. He applied to Mr. Maynwaring *, and used such arguments and insinuations as his experience in courts suggested. His efforts were not more successful than those before made; for the duchess declined parting with the letters, and, though she professed her aversion to publish such a correspondence, she adroitly threw out hints, that she might be compelled to recur to unpleasant measures, in her own justification, if the ministerial writers were suffered to continue their accusations against her, for peculation and corrupt sale of offices.

In this struggle between pride, interest, and fear, with the hopes of proving to the public that she was not wholly in disgrace, she wrote a letter to Sir David Hamilton, to be submitted to the queen, offering to renew her attendance, by assisting in trying on the robes which her majesty had ordered for some public ceremony. The letter being read to the queen by her agent, she charged him to prevent the duchess from coming, though not to say that she had refused to permit her attendance.

* She does not name Mr. Maynwaring in her narrative, but indicates him by the designation of her confidential secretary.

Hitherto the duchess had acted with no less indiscretion than disrespect, by shocking the political prejudices, insulting the dignity, and wounding the feelings of the queen. But at the present period, she made a new and stronger appeal, which, though objectionable in the mode, was justifiable in the principle. The libellous and scurrilous productions which daily issued from the press under the auspices of the ministry, having exhausted their satire and spleen on the duke of Marlborough, involved the duchess in accusations which affected her integrity. In one of the Examiners, written by Swift, Nov. 23. 1710, after a variety of insinuations against the supposed peculation and avarice of the duke, a comparison was introduced between the rewards lavished on him, and the recompence conferred on a Roman general, in which the duke's emoluments were estimated in the aggregate, at the vast amount of £500,000, and those of a Roman warrior, reduced to £994 : 11s. At the end of the same paper an inuendo was introduced, by way of comparison, that the duchess, in the execution of her office during eight years, as mistress of the robes, had also purloined no less than £22,000 a year. *

This slander, though couched in ambiguous terms, was too pointed in its application to be mistaken, either by the public or the party interested. The duchess, therefore, drew up an animated vindication of the duke and of herself, in a

* Conduct; — Narratives of the duchess, and Letters to Sir David Hamilton; — Examiner, No. 16.

private letter to Sir David Hamilton, and sent it with the scurrilous number, to be submitted to her majesty. The queen read it over, and, at the conclusion, acknowledged the justice of the vindication, by the brief remark, "*Every one knows that cheating is not the duchess of Marlborough's fault.*"

Such was the critical situation of the duchess, when her husband was on the eve of his return to England.

CHAPTER 98.

1711.

Return of the duke of Marlborough to England.—Audience of the queen.—Forbidden to suffer the usual vote of thanks to be moved in parliament.—Receives the visits of the ministry.—Endeavours to prevent the disgrace of the duchess.—Interference of the duke of Shrewsbury and Sir David Hamilton.—Interesting audiences of the queen.—He in vain solicits the suspension of his wife's disgrace.—The queen peremptorily demands her key of office.—Delivery of the key.—Expedient of the duchess to vindicate herself against the charge of peculation, and to obtain the arrears of the pension of 2000l.—Her accounts sanctioned.—Disposal of her offices.—She offends the queen by her disrespectful conduct on quitting her apartments in the palace.

On the 23d of December, N. S., the duke of Marlborough embarked in Holland, and after being driven about by contrary winds, landed on the 26th, at Solebay. Having passed the night at Chelmsford, he reached London on the 28th, at five in the afternoon.

His intention was to proceed directly to St. James's, in order to pay his respects to the queen; but as he approached the skirts of the city, the populace gathered around his carriage, exclaiming, "God bless the duke of Marlborough!" "No

wooden shoes!" "No popery!" He found the streets also filled with crowds of the better sorts, and the doors and windows lined with spectators, who joined the acclamations of the people. To avoid an uproar, he went to Montagu House, and, after waiting till the tumultuous assemblage had dispersed, repaired privately, in a hackney coach, to the palace.

His first interview with the queen was a mere audience of ceremony. Neither party being desirous of an immediate explanation, the queen turned her discourse to the weather, the roads, and other trivial objects, and the general, on his part, pleaded fatigue to shorten the visit.

The next audience did not pass with equal reserve and apathy. The queen, to anticipate the remonstrances which she expected, observed, "I am desirous you should continue to serve me, and will answer for the conduct of all my ministers towards you." She added, with an unusual degree of decision, and even harshness, "I must request you would not suffer any vote of thanks to you to be moved in parliament this year, because my ministers will certainly oppose it." The duke received the ungracious command with calmness, and briefly terminated this unpleasant conversation by saying, "I shall always be ready to serve your majesty, if what has recently passed should not incapacitate me."

After this interview, all the ministers paid their official visits to the general, except Harley, who sent him a message of compliment, desiring that their first meeting might occur, as if by accident,

at the council or the court; after which, he would pay him the usual visit. This arrangement accordingly took place, but with equal reserve on both sides.

Indeed, the cruel and unfeeling manner in which he was treated by his former friends and dependants would scarcely be credited, had we not the evidence of a principal actor in the scene. We deem it, therefore, necessary to quote, without any farther comment, the words of the secretary, in a confidential letter to Mr. Drummond, dated January 23. After stating that the "great man," as he invidiously calls him, had been gratified in every point which regarded him, as duke of Marlborough, or as a general, he adds, "He has been told by the duke of Shrewsbury, by Mr. Harley, and by your humble servant, that since the queen agrees to his commanding the army, it is our duty, and in the highest degree our interest, to support him, if possible, better than he ever yet was, and that he may depend upon this. He has seen in other instances, that we were able to see and to pursue that which was right, why should he think us capable of judging on this occasion so wrong? He was told at first that he had nothing to reproach us with, that his wife, my lord Godolphin, and himself, had thrown the queen's favour away, and that he ought not to be angry if other people had taken it up. He was told that his true interest consisted in getting rid of his wife, who was grown to be irreconcileable with the queen, as soon as he could, and with the best grace which he could.

He has been told that he must draw a line between all that has passed, and all that is to come, and that he must begin entirely upon a new foot; that if he looked back to make complaints, he would have more retorted upon him, than it was possible to answer; that, if he would make his former conduct the rule of his future behaviour, he would render his interests incompatible with those of the queen. What is the effect of all this plain dealing? he submits, he yields, he promises to comply; but he struggles to alleviate Meredith's disgrace, and to make the queen make a less figure by going back, than she could have done, by taking no notice at all of the insolence of him and his comrades. He is angry at the duke of Argyle's being appointed to command in Spain, and would, I suppose, have him punished, for acting on a plan which we have all, even the queen herself, been concerned in. In short, to finish this description, I doubt he thinks it possible for him to have the same absolute power which he was once vested with, and believes, perhaps, that those who serve the queen are weak enough not to see the use that he would make of it. Once more, by all the judgment which I can form, the exterior is a little mended; but at heart, the same sentiments remain, and these heightened and inflamed by what he calls provocations. We shall do what we can to support him in the command of the army, without betraying our mistress; and unless he is infatuated, he will help us in this design; for you must know that the moment he leaves the service, and

loses the protection of the court, *such scenes will open as no victories can varnish over.*" *

In his interview with Mr. Secretary St. John, the general was treated with much petulance and reproof, under the affectation of candour and frankness. He was compelled to listen to a political lecture on the difference between the whigs and the tories, and to hear the most unqualified remonstrances on the impolicy of abandoning his former friends for his recent connections.

But the sense of all these indignities was lost in the greatest evil he had hitherto anticipated, the disgrace of his duchess. To prevent or suspend this fatal blow was the object of his most anxious solicitude. In order to ascertain the intentions of the queen, he employed the intervention of Mr. Maynwaring, whose situation as one of the auditors of the imprest, gave him frequent access to Harley. The result, however, contributed to increase his alarm, for the minister continually evaded every inquiry, by the exclamation, "that is the rock on which all will split, if care be not taken to avoid it!"

In the midst of this anxiety, determined on one hand to make her disgrace the signal of his own resignation, and importuned on the other by the intreaties of his friends, both at home and abroad, to retain his post, his mind was deeply affected with the struggle of contending passions, and his health so severely suffered, that the duchess was herself

* Printed in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. ii. Correspondence; and Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 77.

alarmed. She accordingly prevailed on him to take the earliest opportunity of ascertaining the designs of the queen, and urged him not to permit her interests to enter into competition with his own honour and the welfare of his country.

The ministers, at this juncture, were no less agitated and embarrassed than himself. They were fearful lest the threatened fate of the duchess should provoke him to carry his resolution of resigning into effect; and, at the same time, were unable to combat the violent wishes of the queen. In this predicament, they again resorted to the intervention of Shrewsbury, who testified to Marlborough the deepest concern at the new mortification with which he was threatened, and indirectly recommended him to try the effect of his own personal solicitations, before the key was delivered.

At the moment, when the advice gave weight to the arguments of the duchess, a note was received from Sir David Hamilton, which contained an earnest exhortation to make the attempt, without delay. "I have," he wrote, "prepared the way, by telling her, how ill my lord duke was, how deeply grieved about the affair. That his expectation is from the queen's compassion to his duchess. I am of opinion to-day is most fitting. There seemed to be great tenderness." *

This intimation brought the affair to a crisis, sooner than was expected by the duke, or even by the ministers themselves; for such was the irrita-

* The original of this note is still preserved, and is endorsed by the duchess, "from 260," which is the cipher of Sir David Hamilton.

tion of the queen, that the slightest opposition to her will, sufficed to raise her deep-rooted antipathy beyond control.

In an audience, which took place on the 17th of January, Marlborough began by presenting a letter from the duchess, couched in terms of great humility.

"Though I never thought of troubling your majesty in this manner again, yet the circumstances I see my lord Marlborough in, and the apprehension I have that he cannot live six months, if there is not some end put to his sufferings, on my account, makes it impossible for me to resist doing every thing in my power to ease him; and if I am still so unlucky as not to make use of any expressions in this letter that may move your majesty, it is purely for want of understanding; for I really am very sorry that ever I did any thing that was uneasy to your majesty. I am ready to promise any thing that you can think reasonable; and as I do not yet know but two things, in my whole life, that ever I did, that were disagreeable to your majesty, I do solemnly protest, that as long as I have the honour to continue your servant, I will never mention either of those subjects to you, or do any one thing that can give you the least disturbance or uneasiness. And these assurances I am desirous to give your majesty under my hand; because I would not omit any thing possible for me to do, that might save my lord Marlborough from the greatest mortification he is capable of; and avoid the greatest mischief in consequence of it, to your majesty and my country.

"I am, with all the submission and respect imaginable, your majesty's most dutiful and most obedient subject and servant,

"S. MARLBOROUGH."

The queen coolly receiving the letter, for a considerable time refused to open it; at the importunities of the duke, she at last read it, but only observed, "I cannot change my resolution." *

Marlborough then addressed her in the most moving terms, and besought her not to renounce the duchess till she had no more need of his services, which he hoped would be the case in less than a year, by the termination of the war, when both might retire together. He dwelt on all the topics likely to recover her affection toward her former favourite, and her gratitude towards himself. He expatiated on the sorrow and regret of his wife for any mistakes she had ever committed, and her willingness to avoid every act or discourse which might render her majesty uneasy for the future. He concluded with observing, "for your own sake, as well as for ours, your majesty ought not to adopt a harsher proceeding than any prince ever used towards persons of less faithful and long continued services, who had been guilty of greater faults, when pardon was requested, and a firm promise of amendment made. Still more would it reflect on your generosity to deny so trifling an indulgence to one who has been honoured by your friendship, and who has given no substantial cause for so harsh a proceeding." The queen having

* Remarks on the letter itself, in the hand-writing of the duchess.

rejoined, that her honour was interested in the removal of the duchess, he respectfully observed, "What this expression means I never could learn, any more than what faults she has committed." The queen, however, far from listening to his representations, peremptorily insisted that the gold key should be delivered to her within three days. On this, the duke threw himself on his knees, and with the most moving eloquence, earnestly intreated for an interval of ten days, to concert some means of rendering the blow less mortifying and disgraceful. But he obtained no other answer than a positive repetition of the demand, limiting the term to the shorter space of two days.

Finding the queen inexorable, he rose, and turning the conversation, adverted to the mortification which he had experienced by the dismission of the three officers, for drinking his health. But this topic was no less galling than the preceding, and she abruptly broke off the conversation, by exclaiming, "I will talk of no other business till I have the key." He still lingered, though the audience had already lasted an hour; but finding no prospect of softening his royal mistress, he took his leave, with the deepest emotions of indignation and sorrow.*

* It is singular that both whig and tory writers of this period, and subsequent times, as well as the duchess herself in her "Conduct," have given no details of this interesting audience. Possibly, one party was restrained by regret that Marlborough should have submitted to such degrading solicitations without success; and the other, by shame for such unworthy treatment of a general, to whom the crown, as well as the ministers themselves, were so deeply indebted. Indeed, con-

The duchess now saw that there was no hope of reconciliation, and felt the necessity of acting with a dignity becoming her spirit and character. As the duke still expressed a resolution of resigning his command, that it might not appear to arise from the insult offered to herself, she adopted the determination of relinquishing her office without a moment's delay; she accordingly combated his purpose, and prevailed on him to repair, the same evening, to the royal presence, and deliver up the key. On this occasion, he repeated his solicitations to know the offence of which the duchess had been guilty; but, whether confused at his unexpected appearance, or affected with a sense of her own ingratitude, the queen neither maintained her former reserve, nor explained herself with dignity and precision, but, in faltering accents, gave an unintelligible and incoherent reply. *

It may seem extraordinary that Marlborough, on this occasion, did not immediately execute his declared purpose of resigning. This doubtless would have been the case, had he been left to the impulse of his own will. But he was again assailed by Godolphin and the whigs at home, and by his

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sidering the manner in which the duchess has passed over the transaction in her printed "Conduct," we were surprised to find such details extant, even among her papers. Possibly she yielded to the suggestions of her friends in suppressing the narrative for the moment, in the hope that these memorials might be employed at a subsequent time in that historical monument, which she appears to have been so anxious to consecrate to the memory of her husband.

* The particulars of these interesting audiences are drawn from various narratives written by the duchess, some under the impulse of the momeut, and others preparatory to her Vindication.

friends abroad, particularly Eugene * and the pensionary, who concurred in urging that his retreat would dissolve the grand alliance, and ruin the common cause; and that he ought to sacrifice all private feelings and party principles, for the sake of completing the great work which he had begun, and of giving to Europe a solid and lasting peace.

In an evil hour he yielded to these representations, and continued in the command, only to encounter the disgrace and persecution with which he had been threatened, and to lament the conclusion of that dishonourable peace, which he so much deprecated. Though without confidence in the ministers, he concerted measures with them for the future campaign, although every day was marked with new insults, from the queen and parliament.

The duchess being thus disgraced, her object was, to clear herself from the three great imputations with which she was charged, by the solemn sanction of the queen herself. In order to obtain this sanction, she availed herself of the opportunity when she delivered in her accounts, not only to recall to the mind of her royal mistress the offer of the pension of £2000 for which she had never drawn, but carried the whole amount of the arrears, for nine years, to her credit, accompanied with a copy of the queen's letter making the

* In one of her narratives, the duchess asserts that the exhortations of Eugene had the greatest effect in inducing her husband to retain the command.

offer.* In justice to her memory, we describe this transaction in her own words.

" Some of my friends persuaded me to let the queen be asked, whether she would not allow me to take out of the privy purse the two thousand pounds a year which she had so often pressed me to accept, since the reason of my refusing it now ceased, when she had turned me out of my places. I must confess, it went very much against me to desire any thing of her; but when I considered how great a sum of money I had saved her by the management of my offices, the real services I had done her in many respects, and the dear hours of my life I had passed in her service for many years together, without either asking or having any thing of her (except those few trifles I mentioned before) after she came to the crown, which any one will think was the proper time for her to have rewarded her old servants, I thought I should not be in her debt, though she had given me what I had so often refused; and, therefore, that I might very well suffer myself to be governed by my friends in letting her be asked about this matter. Accordingly, I consented that a copy of one of her own letters, in which she pressed me so much to take that money out of the privy purse, should be shewn to her, and that the person that carried it should tell her that I desired to know, before I made up my accounts, whether she still was willing that I should take the money out of the privy purse, as she had desired me in that letter.

* This letter is printed in chap. 14.

When this was proposed to her, she blushed, and appeared to be very uneasy, and not disposed to allow of my putting that money into my accounts; but for want of good counsel or instructions to defend herself in refusing that which she had been so very earnest with me to accept before, she consented that I should do it. Then I sent in my accounts, with that yearly sum charged in them from the time she had offered it to me. But I still used this further caution of writing at the bottom of the accounts before I charged the last sum, a copy of the letter I mentioned before, that when she signed them she might at the same time attest her own letter, and the offer she had made me of her own accord, and pressed me to take in this manner: '*Pray make no more words about it, and either own or conceal it, as you like best, since I think the richest crown could never repay the services I have received from you.*' After this, the queen kept my accounts almost a fortnight by her, in which time I don't doubt but they were well examined by Abigail and Mr. Harley; but there was no fault which they could pretend to find with them, and they were sent back to me without the least objection being made against them, signed by the queen's own hand, who had writ under them that she allowed of them, and was satisfied that they were right. So that the new ministers had nothing left 'em in this matter, but to whisper about the town some scandalous stories of it, and to employ such of their agents as the 'Examiner,' in propagating them." *

* From a letter of the duchess to Mr. Hutchinson.

The queen did not long delay the disposal of the places held by the duchess of Marlborough. The principal office of groom of the stole, or lady of the wardrobe, was conferred on the duchess of Somerset, and the confidential situation of keeper of the privy purse was transferred to Mrs. Masham.

The natural consequence of her removal from the household was, the relinquishment of her apartments in the palace. On this occasion, we regret to record that she acted with no less petulance than want of dignity. She ordered the locks, placed on the doors at her expence, to be taken off, and the marble chimney-pieces to be removed. This proof of petty and disrespectful resentment deeply affected the duke, who was then abroad; and, in a letter, in which he reproves the freedom of her pen towards the new ministers, we find him touching with proper dignity on this delicate subject.

" *May* 24. — We received yesterday four packets at once; three of yours were from St. Alban's: the last, of the 28th, speaks so freely of Mr. Harley, that I am sorry to see that you have already forgot the earnest request made by me in my letter by lord Townshend. The prints being governed by Mr. St. John and Mr. Harley, they must be disagreeable as long as these two see and hear what you speak and write.

" I am sent word the queen is desirous of having the lodgings at St. James's, so that I desire you would give directions for the removing of the furniture, as the queen intends to join some part

of them to her own lodgings. I beg you will not remove any of the marble chimney-pieces. As to Mrs. Cooper's lodgings, which is in the grant of the house, I think you will do well to inform Mr. Craggs of it, that he might acquaint the duke of Shrewsbury, so that the queen might give her directions for the providing for her out of one part of our lodgings.

" The rainy weather is returned, which makes my head uneasy, but I have no doubt of having strength and health to finish this campaign; and I hope by that time the french may be desirous of peace, which is most earnestly wished by your humble servant."

This exhortation appears to have produced its effect; but the orders of the duchess, which could not be concealed, excited the indignation of the queen.* A letter from Mr. Maynwaring details a conversation with Mr. Harley, which shews the deep impression the incident produced at court.

" 285† was two hours with Mr. Harley, who

* Among the papers of the duchess, we find a curious memorandum on the state of the fixtures in these lodgings, which appears to have been drawn up by some person who was appointed to take possession of them after the removal of the duchess.

" *July* 21. 1711.— At the request, and for the vindication of the duke of Marlborough's servants, I do acknowledge to have found those lodgings, formerly called the duke and duchess of Marlborough's lodgings, in the condition as follows: All the furniture removed out of the kitchen and cellar, except the stoves; all brass locks removed, &c. except those to the outward doors; all the looking-glass removed; but all the chimney-pieces and slabs, wainscot, windows, and floors, were left in the same condition they were in, when my lord duke and my lady duchess lived in the lodgings."

† This cipher is probably a mistake for 78, or a double cipher for Mr. Maynwaring.

began to tell me how concerned he was that the queen would do nothing towards the building at Woodstock. I said I was in hopes that matter had been over, having heard so much of it. Mr. Harley answered, 'So it was, till the late bustle about the lodgings.' 'What was that, pray?' said I. 'Come, come,' replied he, 'you must have heard what the duchess has done, and the message sent by Mrs. Cooper.' In short, the queen is so angry, that she says she will build no house for the duke of Marlborough, when the duchess has pulled hers to pieces, taken away the very slabs out of the chimneys, thrown away the keys, and said they might buy more for ten shillings, with a great deal such stuff, too impertinent to mention; but this is made the pretence for what those lying wretches never designed to do, and 285 was desired to acquaint the duke of Marlborough with it, and assure you that Mr. Harley would get it over as soon as he could; but that as yet the queen was inexorable.

"After this, Mr. Harley run over all that had happened since he was out, and before, professed how well he could live with the duke of Marlborough, wished to hear of some good success, which he said would set all right. 285 represented the difficulties the duke was under, but that signified nothing; then I complained of the libels that came out. Mr. Harley said, the duke of Marlborough must not mind them, that he himself was called rogue every day in print, and knew the man that did it, meaning, I doubt, 78 (me), yet he should live fairly with him. But now they

have made it impossible for any thing to be done; they grow strangely impatient for action, and their whole business, from henceforward, will be, to blast the duke of Marlborough's character, and to set him down.

"But nothing is more malicious, nor more villainously meant, than this turn about Blenheim, to make the duke of Marlborough believe that your grace is the cause of that not being done, which, of all things, he desired to have done. Pray give me the satisfaction to know if any body else has spoken of this to you; if not, it should not be mentioned; for then people will leave off telling me what they would not have you know. Here are four pretenders to be scotch secretaries, so that some think none of them will be so."*

* On the vacancy from the death of the duke of Queensbury.

CHAPTER 99.

1711.

Decline in the popularity of Marlborough.—He is assailed by the most calumnious libels.—Effects of the Examiner and other political writings of Swift and Prior.—Parliamentary proceedings.—Inquiry into the causes of the disasters in Spain.—Renewal of the controversy relative to the conduct of Peterborough and Galway.—Galway censured, and Peterborough honoured with the thanks of the house of lords.—Vote of supplies.—Irksome situation of Marlborough.—His anxiety to return to the army.

Hitherto the anxious mind of Marlborough had been sustained by the cheering support of the national voice, and the tribute of approbation, which even his political enemies paid to his meritorious services. But at this period of anguish and disappointment, he had to deplore a fatal change in public opinion, which was wrought by the persevering efforts of a host of libellers, who spared no calumny to asperse his character or decry his merits.

Confident in their integrity, not sufficiently imbued with a taste for literature, nor duly estimating the influence which the press had recently acquired over the public mind, both Marlborough and Godolphin had paid too little attention to that crowd of writers, who began to give a new impulse to the national sentiment. Marlborough

had, indeed, extended his patronage to Prior and Addison; but Godolphin, cold, reserved, and silent by nature, and economical in the disposal of public money, had treated the influence of the press with contempt, and particularly repulsed both Swift and Prior, the first, a giant in political controversy; and the second, writing with a knowledge of public business, the acquisitions of a scholar, and the genius of a poet.

On the contrary, Harley and St. John being eminent scholars themselves, had from taste as well as discernment, learned to estimate the force of this great engine of policy. Hence, by affability and munificence, they soon found means to interest the ablest writers in their cause, and, in particular, gained by their confidence and friendship, Swift and Prior, who were deeply offended by the ill-judged economy, and repulsive demeanour of Godolphin. No one suffered more, nor with less justice, from this imprudent confidence of his colleague, than Marlborough; for he was assailed with all the powers of wit and humour, whetted by personal rancour. Among other political effusions of the time, none produced a greater effect than the Examiner, which was started by Prior, supported by Swift, and in which, St. John himself occasionally condescended to display his brilliancy of talent, and that sophistry of which he was a perfect master. The literary adherents of the ex-ministry, indeed, rallied in their defence; and Maynwaring, Hare, Steele, and Oldmixon, aimed against these powerful antagonists their puny weapons, which fell like the spear darted by the

feeble hand of Priam against the shield of Pyrrhus. * Such combatants, though armed with truth and justice, were overwhelmed with the keen wit of Prior and St. John; with the caustic humour, and inimitable irony of Swift, clothed in a style and language which were calculated to take the deepest hold on the public mind. The consequence was, a rapid increase of that prejudice, which had been excited against the general, and a contempt of those victories, which had before been hailed with universal enthusiasm.

Such, indeed, was the effect of an engine, whose powers had not then been duly appreciated, as to excite the indignant surprise of Smollet, himself decidedly hostile to the whig administration, and to the fame of our illustrious commander. "Marlborough," he says, "who, but a few months before, had been so highly extolled and caressed by the representatives of the people, was now become the object of parliamentary hatred and censure, though no sensible alteration had happened in his conduct or success. That hero, who had retrieved the glory of the british arms, won so many battles, subdued such a number of towns and districts, humbled the pride and checked the ambition of France, secured the liberty of Europe, and, as it were, chained victory to his chariot wheels, was, in a few weeks, dwindled into an object of contempt and derision. He was ridiculed in public

* Sic fatus senior, telumque imbelle sine ictu
Conjecit: rauco quod protinus ære repulsum,
Et summo clypei nequaquam umbone pependit.
Æneid, lib. ii. v. 544.

libels, and reviled in private conversation. Instances were every where repeated of his fraud, avarice, and extortion; of his insolence, cruelty, ambition, and misconduct. Even his courage was called in question; and this consummate general was represented as the lowest of mankind." *

In the midst of this literary warfare, and the fatal wounds which it inflicted on the reputation of Marlborough, the parliamentary proceedings were conducted with a spirit of hostility and vengeance, equally inveterate and unparalleled.

Not content with withholding that tribute of public thanks, which was so justly due, his enemies indulged themselves in indirect censures on his conduct, as well as on that of his former colleagues. They dwelt on the disasters of the war in Spain, and conveyed an invidious reflection on his past successes, by bestowing on the wild and chivalrous enterprises of lord Peterborough, that approbation, which they had denied to the judicious and glorious achievements of a commander, whom even his enemies considered as the pride of his country.

After acquainting the house with the recent reverses in Spain, and with her directions for procuring troops, to repair the losses sustained by the british forces, the queen expressed her hopes, that her conduct would obtain the concurrence and approbation of parliament. Both houses were happy to have this opportunity of accusing the late ministry and insulting the general. With this view, they instituted an inquiry; but, instead of confining

* Smollet, chapter 10, section 20.

themselves to the recent disasters in the peninsula, they extended it retrospectively to the military operations which preceded the fatal battle of Almanza. In returning their thanks to the queen, the peers, in particular, requested her majesty to delay for a few days the departure of lord Peterborough, on his mission to Vienna, for the purpose of being examined before a committee, appointed to make the inquiry into the causes of these reverses.

In the course of this investigation, questions were put to lord Peterborough for the purpose of displaying his merits. He quoted his replies from the Apology for his Conduct, written by Dr. Freind, under his own direction, in which he criminated lord Galway for his advice in the council of war at Valencia, to prosecute offensive hostilities, and imputed to that advice the defeat at Almanza, and the subsequent disasters in Spain. In consequence of these charges, Galway was summoned and examined; and, after a justificatory recapitulation of his conduct, was permitted to withdraw. After Godolphin, Wharton, and Halifax had spoken in his favour, the duke of Marlborough observed, with great feeling, "it was somewhat strange that generals, who had acted to the best of their understanding, and had lost their limbs in the service, should be examined like offenders, about insignificant things; and he could not imagine the meaning of such proceedings, nor where they would stop." This observation making no impression, the inquiry was continued; and the question on the comparative

merits and conduct of Peterborough and Galway, which had wearied the public attention in 1707, was revived, and gave rise to the most animated and violent debates. Galway, as being devoted to the whigs, and protected by Marlborough, was bitterly reproached by the tories; while Peterborough, who had deserted to the tories, and marshalled himself with the foes of his former patron, received the unqualified support of the ministerial majority.

Elated by this triumph, the victorious party next endeavoured to represent the misconduct of the war in Spain, as the principal cause which occasioned the failure of the expedition against Toulon.

In the debate which arose on this subject, Peterborough declared, that the duke of Savoy insisted so firmly on a defensive war in Spain, that he desired to have 5000 men from the army in that country. Marlborough however positively contradicted this assertion, and observed: —

"My lords;—I had the honour of the queen's commands to treat with the duke of Savoy, about an attempt upon Toulon, which her majesty, from the beginning of this war, had looked upon as one of the most effectual means to finish it. And I can assure you, that in the whole negotiation with his royal highness's ministers, one of whom, count Briançon, is dead, the other, count Maffei, is now here, not one word was spoken of Spain, where the war was to be managed upon its own bottom, as well as that of Italy, and both independently upon one another. As for the war in Spain, it

was the general opinion of England, that it should be offensive; and as to my lord Peterborough's projects, I can assure your lordships, that one of the greatest instances that Holland and the duke of Savoy made, was, that the emperor and we should not insist upon an expedition to Naples, which might hinder the other design.

" My lords; my intentions were always honest and sincere, to contribute all that lay in my power to bring this heavy and expensive war to an end. God Almighty has blessed my endeavours with success; but if men are to be censured, when they give their opinions to the best of their understandings, I must expect to be found fault with as well as the rest.

" My lord Galway and every body in Spain have done their duty; and though I must own that lord has been unhappy, and that he had no positive orders for a battle; yet I must do him the justice to say, that the whole council of war were of his opinion, to fight the enemy before the coming up of the duke of Orleans, with a reinforcement of 9 or 10,000 men.

" On the other hand, I confess I do not understand how the separation of the army would have favoured the siege of Toulon."

Peterborough stating, in explanation, that " there was a necessity of going to Madrid," the duke resumed, " I will not contradict that noble lord, as to the situation of the country; but the situation of the army could not be preparatory to a defensive, but to an offensive war, which, in my opinion, was the best way to make a diversion,

and thereby hinder the french from relieving Toulon. But after all, that unhappy battle had no other effect than to reduce us to the defensive; for the french troops that were detached from Spain, never came before Toulon."

Notwithstanding this explicit declaration, and other arguments of equal force, advanced by him and his colleagues, and but feebly opposed by the tories, the question was carried, "that the late ministers were justly to be blamed, for contributing to all our disasters in Spain, and the consequent disappointment of the expedition against Toulon, by carrying on an offensive war in Spain." It concluded, "that the earl of Peterborough performed many great and eminent services; and had his opinion in the council of war at Valencia been followed, it might very probably have prevented the subsequent misfortunes."

Against this vote, a protest was entered, with the signatures of no less than six-and-thirty peers.

After these proceedings, the thanks of the house, on a motion of the duke of Buckingham, were voted to lord Peterborough, for his remarkable and eminent services. The lord keeper Harcourt, in conveying this congratulation, introduced into his address a malignant aspersion on the duke of Marlborough, by extolling the magnanimity of Peterborough in preferring to accept this honour *unalloyed by any other reward.* After this deliberate and ungracious, though indirect stigma, upon the great commander, he added, in a disgusting strain of more than spanish hyperbole, "had more days been allowed me than I have had

minutes, to call to mind the wonderful and amazing success, which perpetually attended your lordship in Spain (the effect of your lordship's personal bravery and conduct), I would not attempt the enumerating your particular services; since I should offend your lordship, by the mention of such as I could recollect, and give a just occasion of offence to this honourable house, by my involuntary omission of the far greater part of them. Had your lordship's wise counsels, particularly your advice at the council of war in Valencia, been pursued in the following campaign, the fatal battle of Almanza, and our greatest misfortunes, which have since happened in Spain, had been prevented, and the design upon Toulon might have happily succeeded."

The peers subsequently exposed their partiality, by censuring lord Galway for giving precedence to the portuguese troops, and still more degraded their dignity, by condemning a reply to Dr. Freind's Account of Peterborough's conduct, and by ordering the author and printer to be taken into custody. They closed their proceedings on spanish affairs, with an address to the queen, in which they recapitulated their votes and resolutions declaratory of lord Peterborough's services, and lord Galway's misconduct. They also laid before her majesty a report of the committee appointed to inquire into the deficiency of the forces in Spain, and proposed a remedy. *

* Journals; — Chandler's Debates of the House of Lords; — Boyer's Reign of Queen Anne, p. 185; — Tindal, vol. xvii. p. 342—347.

In the midst of these stormy debates, the commons voted considerable supplies for the service of the year, amounting to more than £6,000,000; and the most solemn promises were conveyed to the commander-in-chief, that all requisites for the pay of the army, and other military services, should be punctually furnished.

When we consider the insolence with which Marlborough was treated by the tory leaders, and the abuse heaped upon him by their subaltern dependants, in the ministerial publications of the day, we may judge of the little cordiality which existed on either side. We may estimate the mortification which he must have felt for his ill-requited services, in continuing in a command, where he must have been aware that he was placed only to be dishonoured and disappointed, and to see his efforts marred, by the clandestine intrigues of the new ministry with the french court. Pressed, however, on all hands, by the emperor, the duke of Savoy, the elector of Hanover, and the States, as well as by the friendly exhortations of Eugene, the whigs, and Godolphin, he reluctantly consented to retain a post, where he had little to hope, and all to fear. In the anguish of his mind, he confessed to bishop Burnet, that his wishes to resign had been over-ruled by these concurrent representations, and that he sacrificed himself for the sake of the common cause.

It must, indeed, have been a sacrifice of no ordinary kind, for a man of his magnanimity to receive cold, ceremonious, and often reproachful audiences of the queen, to be reduced to listen to

the taunts of his former dependants, and to be lectured on his military conduct by Harley and St. John. Much more irksome must it have been, to concert the details of the future campaign with ministers who, while they mocked him with professions of their zealous support, were making secret overtures of accommodation to the enemy. Compelled, however, to wear the aspect of confidence and cordiality, where he suspected deception; and to assume the appearance of tranquillity, where he was hourly exposed to reproach, insult, and petulance, he bore these outrages with more calmness than seemed congenial with his sensitive mind; and this victory over his passions is no less honourable to his character, than the brightest of his triumphs over the public enemy.

It is no wonder that he was anxious to remove from this scene of mortification; and notwithstanding the discouraging auspices under which he prepared for his journey, that he was eager to return to the army, where, if not shielded from the insults of his political enemies, he was at least farther removed from the sphere of their influence.

At the moment of his departure, and soon after his arrival in Holland, he was doomed to witness new proofs of the hostility with which, in the persons of his friends, he was persecuted by the agents of government. Cadogan, whose military as well as political talents were of the highest order, who had won his confidence by his services, and had essentially contributed to some of his most brilliant successes, was removed from the post of envoy to the States, and replaced, first by Mr. Hill,

the brother of Mrs. Masham, and afterwards by lord Orrery, with whom he had particular reason to be dissatisfied. Lord Townshend, also, whose integrity, abilities, and zeal, were peculiarly acceptable, was superseded in the office of plenipotentiary at the Hague, by lord Raby, whose violence and indiscretion Marlborough had long lamented, and whose captious spirit had been to him a perpetual source of disquietude.

END OF THE FIFTH VOLUME.

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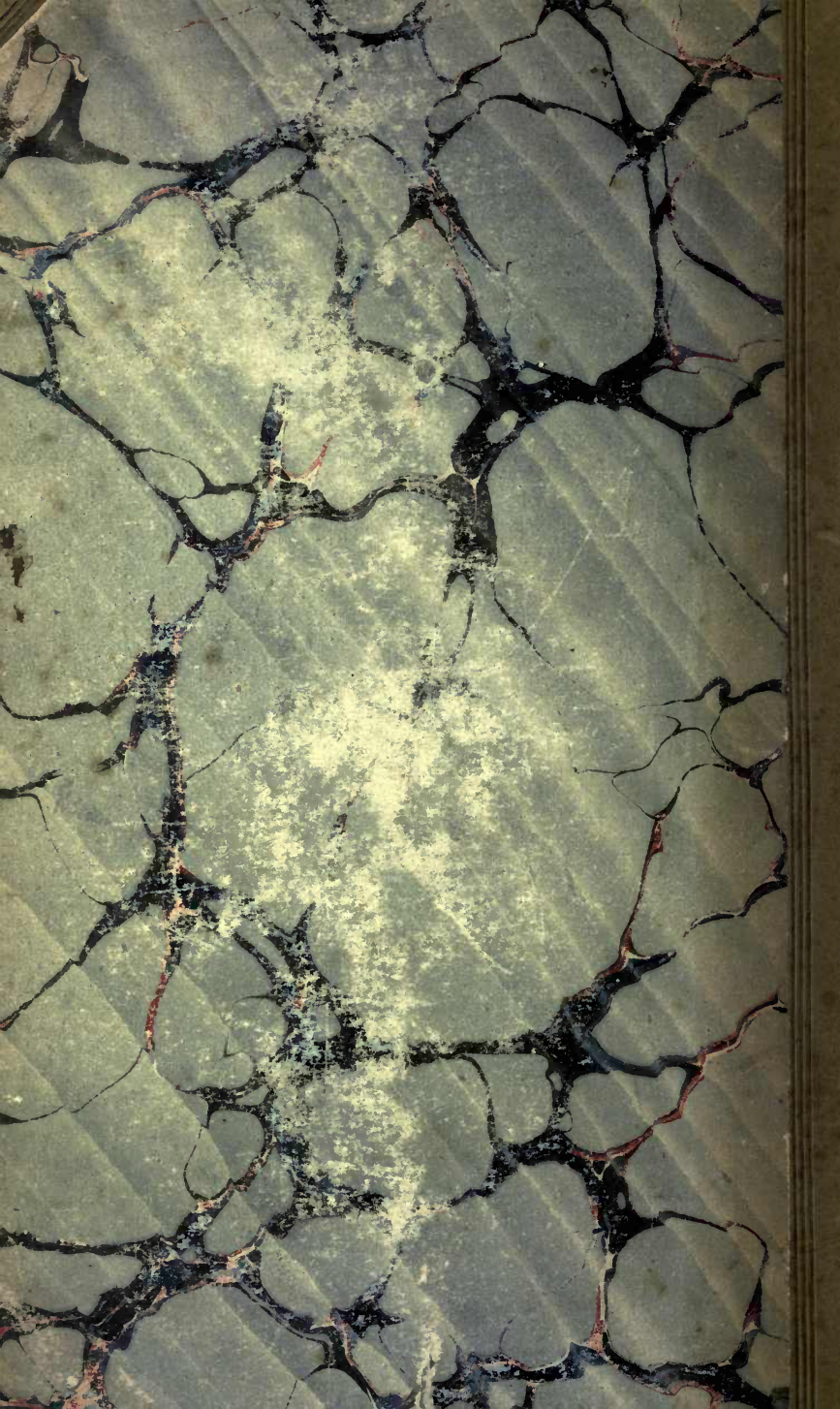
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